

THE  
C H R O N I C L E  
OF  
E N G L A N D;

OR, A  
COMPLEAT HISTORY,

CIVIL, MILITARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL,

OF THE  
ANCIENT BRITONS AND SAXONS,

FROM THE  
LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR IN BRITAIN, TO THE  
NORMAN CONQUEST.

WITH A  
COMPLEAT VIEW  
OF THE  
MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ARTS, HABITS, &c. OF THOSE PEOPLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY JOSEPH STRUTT.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

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MDCCLXXIX.

## TO THE READER.

**I**T has long been lamented by all who are conversant in the history of this country, that the more early parts of it are involved in the greatest obscurity. It is true the materials are so very imperfect (at least such as are authentic) that it is impossible to arrange them in such order as to furnish a regular history of the first six or seven centuries. This was the cause which induced our best authors, either entirely to neglect the annals of those times, or else to hurry through them as hastily as possible, in order to get forward to the Norman conquest, from which period the materials are more copious, clear and authentic; and hence it is, that our histories of the latter ages are so much more compleat and satisfactory: for few men of great abilities are possessed of patience equal to the task of turning over so many dry prolix records of barbarism and superstition as are absolutely necessary for the completing a history of the early ages.

Another very material object of complaint (particularly with respect to the histories of the ancient Britons and Saxons) is the little attention which has been paid to the delineation of the manners, customs, habits, &c. of the people; and to this neglect is owing the prevalence of the general opinion, that nothing can be found either amusing or instructive in those remote ages; but this is surely a great mistake; for a careful investigation of these important particulars will not only be pleasant,



pleasant, but even useful to the generality of readers. And it is the chief object of the present work to supply as much as possible this defect.

The following work is divided into three general parts: namely, first, the Civil and Military History; secondly, the Ecclesiastical History; and thirdly, the History of the Manners, Arts, Habits, Genius, &c. of the People; and this last part is subdivided into ten or more chapters, so that any particular subject may be easily referred to.

In order to convey a clearer and more lively idea of the manners, &c. of the people, a variety of engravings (two and forty in number) are given in the course of the work, collected from the most authentic materials. All the drawings for these engravings, whether they consist of copies from ancient delineations in manuscripts,\* or are real views of buildings, earth-works, monuments, or the like; are taken from the things themselves with the greatest exactness. Also, the plates are all of them executed by, or under the immediate inspection of, the author; and at the end of each volume, by way of appendix, is printed an account of the plates, which refers the reader to the originals from whence they are copied.

\* If any of our readers should doubt the authenticity of the drawings in ancient manuscripts, they are wished to examine the three volumes the *Hopfa Angelcynnau*, or the Manners and Customs of the English, where this subject is largely treated upon, and near one hundred and fifty plates are given, which contain faithful copies of original manuscript delineations, in their rude and uncorrected state. In the present work, almost all the figures taken from the ancient MSS. are put into better proportion, and higher finished than the originals, though at the same time the position of the figure, the folds of the drapery, &c. are closely attended to; and some will be given exactly copied, to display the taste of the times in which they were done.

Thus much, the author hopes, will be thought new and interesting to the public; as it is presumed a view of the very ideas of our ancestors must give an additional pleasure in the perusal of their history.

With regard to the history civil, military, and ecclesiastical, which composes the two first parts of the work, the author can safely declare that no pains have been spared to render them as complete as possible, though as concise as they could conveniently be made, in order to confine the whole work within the bounds proposed.

Concerning the civil and military history of the Britons, little new and authentic matter could be collected; however, every ancient record has been examined with the utmost care, and the various authors regularly referred to at the bottom of the page. The history of the heptarchy the author hopes will be esteemed more regular, if not more complete, than any hitherto published; and by means of the table at the end of this volume, all the several Saxon kings, who ruled in the different kingdoms, may be at once referred to.

Thus much the author has thought necessary to be declared concerning the novelty of the work, and the advantage arising to the reader, who, without the trouble of turning over a multitude of books, may at one view behold the history and manners of his countrymen, in their most early state, distinctly arranged under their proper heads. It now remains to beg the indulgence of the public, that they would excuse the errors which they may find in the prosecution of this laborious task.

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## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T I.

*From the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the Arrival of the Saxons.*

**T**HE first authentic accounts that we have of the ancient state of Britain and its inhabitants are from Julius Cæsar, who having extended his conquests through great part of Gaul, attacked the territories of the Britons, a people till then almost unknown to the world in general.

Cæsar's accounts  
of Britain the  
first that are au-  
thentic.

If there ever existed any earlier accounts of Britain than the Commentaries of Cæsar, they are now unhappily lost; for though it is true, that the Phœnician and Greek merchants carried on a considerable traffic with the Britons long before the arrival of Cæsar, yet it is certain, and that for political reasons, they forbore to give any true description of the people, and even kept the situation of the island itself a secret.

Lamenting then the want of more ancient records, proceed we to a faithful examination of those which we are possessed of, at least such of them as may be deemed authentic.

VOL. I.

B

Julius

A. A. C. 55. Julius Cæsar, whose unbounded ambition led him to seek fresh laurels in remote climates, and to set up the Roman standard in unknown regions, desirous of adding to the glory which he had already acquired in Gaul; meditated the conquest and subjection of the distant inhabitants of Britain, who in their secret recesses had so long remained sequestered from the world, and undisturbed by any foreign war.\* The reason which he himself has been pleased to assign to us for his undertaking, was, that the Britons had aided their neighbours, the Gauls, in their wars against him; therefore, he thought himself sufficiently justified in commencing hostilities with such an unfriendly people.†

Volufenus sent to explore the coast of Britain.

His first step was to enquire of those merchants who traded to Britain, concerning the size of the island, its inhabitants, their customs, and military discipline, and also particularly what havens they might have for the reception of large ships; but the accounts he received from them were so very uncertain, that he was obliged to send Caius Volufenus with a galley to coast about near the shore, in order to make the best discoveries that he could, and return to him again as quickly as possible; whilst he himself, commanding his navy to assemble together, marched towards the territories of the Morini,‡ as conjecturing that province to lie the nearest to Britain.

The Britons send ambassadors to Cæsar.

In the mean time, this purpose of Cæsar's was not so secretly conducted, but that the Britons received intelligence thereof from the Gaulish merchants: upon which, they sent ambassadors immediately from several of their cities to Cæsar, offering him hostages, and making proffers of peace. These messengers he received very graciously, promising them fairly, and encouraging them to continue in the same quiet resolutions. Thus were they dismissed, and with them he sent Comius, king of the Atrebatians,§ who was commissioned to go to as many of the states as he could, and persuade them to seek alliance with the Romans, and to inform them that Cæsar himself would shortly come thither. Cæsar the rather chose this man to execute his commission, because he approved of his bravery and conduct, and also supposed he would be faithful to him; besides, he was thought to have great interest amongst the British states: yet, upon the return of the ambassadors, the assembly of the Britons (whether because they suspected the smooth promises of Cæsar, or apprehended that Comius was sent as a spy) seized upon him immediately, and threw him into prison.||

Volufenus returns.

Now C. Volufenus returned to Cæsar on the fifth day, having made all the discoveries he could by sailing near the shore; for he did not dare to land, nor trust himself amongst the people.

Cæsar's embarkation and landing in Britain.

Cæsar having prepared eighty ships of burthen, embarked two of his legions; when giving the necessary orders to the chief officers whom he

\* Sueton. in Vita Jul. Cæs.

† Cæs. Com. de Bel. Gal. lib. iv. cap. 18.

‡ The *Morini* inhabited the sea-coasts about Calais and Boulogne.

§ The Atrebatians were an ancient Belgic nation, who inhabited *Artois*.

|| Cæs. Bel. Gal.

left behind him in Gaul, he set sail about the third watch of the night, A. A. C. 55. commanding his horsemen to go to the residue of his ships, which lay further off within eight miles, and had been kept back by the wind, that they might there embark and follow him. He himself with his foremost ships reached the British coasts about ten o'clock in the forenoon, the 26th day of August, and fifty-five years before Christ,\* where he found the hills covered with armed men, and the place also very inconvenient for their landing; therefore, he ordered his navy to cast anchor, and waited till three o'clock for the arrival of his horsemen: but when he found that they did not make their appearance, he called a council of his lieutenants and tribunes, and declared to them the information he had received from Volusenus, and also what he was resolved to do; desiring them in all things to observe his nod, and to be careful that his orders should be duly performed in exact and proper time. This done, he caused them to weigh anchor, and with his fleet came to a plain and open shore, which is commonly thought to be Deal, in Kent.† But the Britons perceiving his intention, sent their forces thither to prevent his landing. Cæsar's ships being too large to come up close to the shore, his soldiers, to their great disadvantage, were obliged to leap into the waves, and wade to the land; which the Britons observing, entered the water a little way, and gave them such a warm reception, that, as Cæsar himself confesses, they were greatly terrified. To remedy this inconvenience, he caused the galleys to advance, in which were set up the slings and other instruments of war; a sight so unusual dismayed the Britons, and they began to give back, notwithstanding the Roman soldiers seemed unwilling to leave their ships, until the standard-bearer of the tenth legion, making earnest supplication to the gods, threw himself from the ship wherein he was embarked, and advanced towards the Britons, calling to his fellows to follow him if they wished to prevent their standard from falling into the hands of their enemies. Fired at his words, and animated by his bold example, the soldiers presently leaped into the water, and advanced, lest they should lose their ensign. The encounter was sharp and fierce on both sides; for the Romans jumping confusedly out of their ships, could neither get firm footing nor keep in proper array; and the Britons watching their opportunity, came down upon them in companies, and where but few were assembled, made a violent attack, throwing their darts with vast resolution and courage, to the great annoyance of the Romans. Cæsar seeing this, caused all his small boats to be filled with soldiers, and where any of his companies were oppressed, he sent them succour; by this means the chief of the foot were landed, which was no sooner done than they charged fiercely upon the Britons, and put them to flight.‡ Yet this victory was by no means compleat, for the want of the horsemen to pursue them.

\* Philosophical Transactions. No. 193.  
Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I.  
chap. i.

† Vide Speed's Chron. and Lambardes' Peramb. of Kent.

‡ Dion. Hist. Rom. lib. 39.

A. A. C. 55. Cæsar having landed his army, and repulsed the opponents, encamped near the shore; but the Britons were so dejected and dismayed, that they concluded amongst themselves, the best method which they could pursue would be to submit to Cæsar: therefore, they sent ambassadors to him a second time, with Comius of Artois, whom they had now released from his confinement; and excused themselves for having put him in bonds, laying all the blame of that transaction upon the fury of the common people; they also sued to Cæsar for peace, and proffered to give him hostages. He gently reproving them, consented to take their hostages; part of which were immediately delivered, and the rest promised to be sent in a few days. After this, the British chiefs resorted from every quarter, and submitted themselves and their cities to Cæsar.\*

Britons sue for peace.

The losses sustained by the Romans.

The fourth day after the arrival of the Romans in Britain, the ships in which the Roman cavalry were embarked, were dispersed, and driven back by a great tempest; and also, by the spring tides, Cæsar's ships and galleys, which were near, and upon the shore, were broken and spoiled. The Britons perceiving these unfortunate accidents to have happened to the Romans, began by degrees to withdraw from the camp, and privately to assemble their men out of the country. Cæsar seeing the delay of the Britons in the delivery of the remainder of the hostages, suspected their designs, therefore he quickly made every provision necessary for the camp, and repaired his ships with the loss of twelve, which were broken up and used.†

The Britons again begin the war.

The Britons now broke out into open hostilities with the Romans, and made a fierce attack upon one of their legions, which was foraging; but Cæsar, with the rest of the troops, coming timely to their aid, they recovered their camp again without much loss: these accidents were followed by many stormy days, which confined the Romans to their camp. In the mean time, the Britons carefully published abroad the smallness of the numbers of their enemies; and invited all their neighbours to join with them in making a noble struggle for the recovery of their liberty; the thoughts of shaking off the threatening oppression glowed in their breasts, and they joyfully flocked from every quarter: and assembling together a numerous host, they resolved immediately to attack the Roman entrenchment; but Cæsar, as soon as he was informed of their intentions, brought his men out of the camp, and drew them up in battle array before the entrance; a fierce engagement ensued, but in the end the Britons were totally overcome; and the Romans pursuing them, made a prodigious slaughter, and burnt their houses on every side.‡

Cæsar returns to Gaul.

The victory obtained, Cæsar withdrew into his camp; and the same day the miserable remnant of the Britons sent their ambassadors to him again to pacify his anger, and sue for peace. Reproving them for their dissingenuity, he charged them with a double number of hostages, and

\* Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. iv. cap. 25.

† Ib. c. 26. et Dion. Hist. Rom. l. 39.

‡ Cæs. cap. 30, 31.



commanded them to be brought over into Gaul to him. Cæsar having A. A. C. 55. thus settled his affairs in Britain, took the first fair opportunity of departing thence; and a little after midnight weighing anchor, he returned into Gaul, leaving the Britons to the performances of their promises.\*

This was the end of Cæsar's first expedition, according to his own account of it: yet we find a very short step made towards the conquest of the island: and indeed his precipitate departure, not even waiting for the delivery of the hostages which were demanded, and forsaking entirely those advantages which he had gained, seem strong indications of his having met with a much warmer reception from the Britons than he had expected. Yet so greatly did he extol this performance, in the letters which he sent to Rome, that the senate decreed a supplication of twenty days to his honour. But all that was gained by this exploit, either for his own advantage, or public benefit, was the glory of the undertaking.†

No sooner was Cæsar safely arrived in Gaul, than he issued forth his orders for preparations to be made, necessary for a second invasion of Britain; and commanded his lieutenants to build him as many new ships as they could during the course of the winter, and to repair such of the old ones as were damaged; but he caused some necessary variations to be made in those ships which were new built, from the usual method adopted by the Romans. In the first place, they were made lower, for the conveniency of loading; and again, they were made broader, the better to contain the horses, and things of great weight. These orders were so punctually complied with, that on Cæsar's return to Gaul in the spring, he found six hundred ships and twenty-eight galleys, all ready to be set afloat in a few days.

The spring advancing, Cæsar ordered his fleet to meet him at Calais,‡ A. A. C. 54. from whence he knew was the shortest cut into Britain; which order was carefully obeyed by all his fleet; forty ships excepted, which were driven back again by a violent tempest. Cæsar embarked with five legions of foot, and two thousand horsemen, setting sail at sun-set; (probably about the month of May, or June) and at noon he reached Britain, where he landed without the least opposition; for the Britons, dismayed at the appearance of the Roman fleet, which seemed so numerous, had left the shore, and retired higher up into the country.§ When Cæsar had landed his troops, he learnt, from certain fugitives, where the chief forces of the Britons were posted. He resolved instantly to pursue them; therefore, having fixed on a proper place for his camp, he left his ships at anchor, with ten cohorts and three hundred horsemen to guard them; setting forward about the third watch with the main body of his army towards the enemy. When he had marched about twelve miles, in the night, he came in sight of the Britons, who had taken post by a river's side,||

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. iv. cap. 32.

† Dion. Hist. Rom. lib. xxxix.

‡ Portus Itius.

§ Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 7.

|| Thought to be the Stour, in Kent.

A. A. C. 54. and were possessed of the rising grounds, from whence with their chariots and horsemen they made a vigorous attack upon the Romans; but being at last repulsed by Cæsar's cavalry, they retired into the woods, where they occupied a strong place, well fortified both by nature and by art;\* for with timber which they had cut down, they had closely barricadoed all the passes; themselves falling out in small parties to defend the entrenchment, and prevent the Romans from possessing the entrances. But the soldiers of the seventh legion having raised a<sup>d</sup> mount, marched (firmly knit together) under the covert of their shields, and without the loss of much blood, took possession of the fortification, and drove the Britons from the woods. But Cæsar would not permit his soldiers to make any long pursuit, because the day was far advanced, and he knew they were unacquainted with the nature of the country. The rest of the evening he spent in fortifying his camp.†

Cæsar's ships damaged.

Early the next morning Cæsar divided his army into three bodies, and sent them out in pursuit of the fugitive Britons; who, however, were not gone far, for their rear was descried by the Roman soldiers when they had proceeded but a small distance from their camp. All things being thus disposed, a sudden accident put a stop to the pursuit; Cæsar received the disagreeable news from Q. Atrius (whom he had left to guard the fleet) that in the night, by means of a dreadful tempest, his ships had all of them sustained great damage, and many of them were quite destroyed. On the reception of this alarming account, Cæsar recalled his troops, and with his whole force hastened back to the camp, where he soon beheld the miserable devastation. However, not dismayed with this unexpected shock, he immediately caused those ships which were left to be repaired; and such was the activity of his soldiers, that in ten days the navy was again put into good order, with the loss of forty ships only. This done, with great labour they were drawn upon the shore, and inclosed within the camp. Having thus made them secure, he left the same guard as before in the entrenchment; and with his army returned again to the place where he had defeated the Britons.‡

The Britons elected a general.

It may perhaps seem strange that the Britons should have let slip so favourable an opportunity of distressing the Romans as appears now to have offered; for whilst they were attentively busy in the reparation of their fleet, they might have been attacked with great probability of success. But it seems that they were employed in a different manner during this interval, as in the electing of a general, the strengthening their confederacy, and increasing their power. Convinced, as they were, of the superior force of the Roman legions, they now resolved to enter into a strong combination, and for a time to sacrifice their private animosities to the public good. Happy if these resolutions had been as faithfully followed as they were prudently made! The public choice fell upon Cassi-

\* Writers in general have supposed this entrenchment was made somewhere about the spot on which Canterbury now stands.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. libi v. cap. 8.

‡ Ibid. cap. 9.

bellanus, prince of the Cassi, or Catiuellani,\* who was accordingly A. A. C. 54. elected general. He was a man of approved valour and experience, who had long before the arrival of Cæsar been busied in continual wars and discords with the neighbouring cities; nor must we here pass over a very important subject, which offers to view:—the death of Imanuentius, the king of the Trinobantes, whom Casibellanus had slain, and usurped the government of that dominion. Mandubratius, the son of Imanuentius, in order to secure his own life, fled from Britain into Gaul, seeking the protection of Cæsar; and with the view of revenging himself on Casibellanus, he is thought to have persuaded Cæsar to undertake this war against the Britons.†

Casibellanus placed at the head of the British forces, endeavoured in the first place to hinder the licentious marches of the Roman troops, falling out upon them, when an occasion served, with his chariots and horses, and skirmishing fiercely with them; but finding he was not able to cope with them, he made his retreat to the hills, and the Romans too eager in their pursuit, had a considerable number of their detachment cut off by the flying parties of the Britons. After this time the Britons retired, and lay close in the woods, waiting a proper opportunity of attacking the Romans; which they did in a sudden manner, as they were fortifying their camp, without the least suspicion of danger; for the Britons issuing with great impetuosity from the woods, fell furiously upon the party set to guard the trenches, and a fierce engagement ensued. Cæsar alarmed for their safety, sent out two cohorts to their succour, but before they joined their fellows, the desperate Britons seeing their danger, broke through the midst of the two parties, and retired, with little loss, to their secret recesses.‡ On the part of the Romans, (amongst others) Q. Laberius Durus, a tribune, was slain.§ The next day after this encounter, the Britons appeared at a distance upon the hills in straggling parties, shewing themselves but seldom; nor did they make their attacks so often, or so sharply, as they had done the day before. Cæsar presuming from these circumstances, that they would not venture another engagement with his troops, sent out three legions, and all the horse, with Caius Trebonius, a lieutenant, to forage: when on a sudden the Britons issued from the woods with great impetuosity, and fell upon the Romans on every side. But the horsemen of the Romans bearing down closely upon them, supported and followed by the foot, slew a great number, giving them no time to rally again, or leap from their chariots to oppose them.||

This discomfiture so damped the spirits of the Britons, that they disbanded themselves, and no more united their whole power to oppose the Romans. Casibellanus, their general, also discouraged by the defection of his allies, and their continual murmurs, seeing that his troops were

Casibellanus retires from Cæsar.

\* The ancient inhabitants of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Buckinghamshire.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 16.

‡ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 12.

§ Stow, quoting the Chronicle of Wygmore, says, this action happened at Chelton wood, near where Rochester now stands.

|| Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 13.

A. A. C. 54: not an equal match with the Romans in a pitched battle, resolved to retire into his own territories, and to act only on the defensive. Cæsar pursued the Britons along the banks of the Thames, and at last resolved upon entering the dominion of Casibellanus. This crafty general suspecting that the Roman chief would most probably form such a design, caused strong sharp stakes to be set down into the bottom of the river, in the only place where it was fordable; which was so artfully performed that they were entirely hid by the water from the sight of the Roman soldiers;\* and this stratagem would doubtless have been productive of a happy effect, but that Cæsar getting intelligence thereof by the means of some fugitives, his troops were as careful as possible to avoid them. Cæsar being come to the brink of the river, found the opposite bank was possessed by a great army of the enemy, who seemed prepared to resist his troops: he then sent his horses first into the river, and commanded the foot to follow; and so sudden were they in passing the stream, (although they could but just keep their heads above the water) and so violent was their attack upon the Britons, that they soon gave back, and retired further up into the country.†

Various states  
submit to Cæ-  
sar.

Whilst Cæsar was upon his march, the Trinobantes, one of the chief provinces of Britain, through their dislike to Casibellanus, who had slain their king, took this opportunity of revenge; for, finding that Mandubratius, their prince, was with Cæsar, and under his protection, they sent ambassadors to him, submitting themselves to his direction, and offering him hostages; at the same time intreating him to protect their prince from the injuries of Casibellanus, and send him back to take the government of their state upon him. Cæsar willingly complied with their requests, sending Mandubratius to them, demanding only forty hostages, and a certain quantity of provisions for his army; which demand they instantly complied with. Their example was followed by the Cenimagani, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and the Cassi. Cæsar derived great advantage from the submission of these states, because from them he received such information as he desired concerning Casibellanus, and also was directed to his city, which was strongly fortified about with woods and marshy grounds; in which, he was informed, there was placed a great number of men, and much cattle. He therefore determined to march thither, and attack the Britons in their fortrefs, in hopes either to kill or take Casibellanus, and to disperse his allies.‡

Casibellanus dis-  
bands part of his  
army.

Casibellanus, in the mean time, well knowing that it would be impossible with open force to oppose the passage of the Romans, disbanded the greater part of his army, retaining only about four thousand chariots, and under covert of the woods watched carefully the route which Cæsar and his army took; he also drove away the cattle and the people

\* Two ancient authors affirm, that these stakes were to be seen in their days: they are said to have been of the bigness of a man's thigh, bound about with lead, and

driven into the bed of the river. Bede Ecc. Hist. lib. i. cap. 2. & Ann. Affer.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. cap. 14 & 15.

‡ Ibid. cap. 17.

from thence into the woods, and harassed the Romans in their marches, A. A. C. 54. setting furiously upon all such as were sent out to forage; so that Cæsar, to ensure his own safety, was obliged to restrain his men from straggling far from the main body, and to confine their plunders within the limits of their march.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, Cæsar resolutely marched up to the city of Cafibellanus,\* and commanding his army to storm it in two places at once, they soon gained an entrance, and put the Britons to flight, great numbers of them were slain, the rest escaped at the opposite side, hiding themselves in the deep recesses of the woods, whilst Cæsar plundered the town, and found great store of cattle and provisions. Cafibellanus, like a brave and noble general, not yet cast down with these repeated shocks of evil fortune, formed an excellent and truly political scheme; for, recollecting how far the Romans were come from their ships, and being informed how small the numbers were which were left to guard them, imagined that a favourable opportunity offered to destroy the fleet; therefore, he dispatched speedy messages to the four kings of Kent, Cingetorix, Carnilius, Taxamagulus, and Segonax, exhorting them to gather all the forces together that they could, in order to make an attack upon the Roman soldiers left behind in the camp, and to burn the fleet. These orders they instantly obeyed, but indeed with ill success; for the victorious Romans beat them from the camp, with great slaughter, and took Cingetorix prisoner.†

Cæsar takes the city of Cafibellanus.

This last effort of the unfortunate Cafibellanus succeeding so ill, together with the dissensions and controversies of his allies, and the faithlessness of the British states, at last reduced him to such straits, that seeing no hopes of defending his territories any longer, and having performed all the duties of a true patriot and a valiant soldier, he submitted himself to the severe decrees of fate, sending ambassadors to Cæsar to sue for peace; also, the better to gain his favour, he sent with them Comius of Artois, Cæsar's friend. This submission of Cafibellanus was a most fortunate event for Cæsar; for, as he had determined to winter in Gaul, and the season was now advancing, he by this means put a much quicker end to the war, than could have been expected. However, he received the ambassadors with the air of a conqueror, and demanded a certain number of hostages to be delivered up, and stipulated a tribute to be annually paid to the Romans; he also strictly commanded Cafibellanus, in no manner of sort to oppress Mandubratius, or the people of his dominion. This done, Cæsar taking the hostages, marched back to his fleet, and at two embarkations returned again with his army into Gaul.‡

Cafibellanus submits to Cæsar.

We should be very glad to have known how great the annual tribute was, which Cæsar laid upon the Britons.§ It seems, indeed, to have

Observations on Cæsar's expedition.

\* Supposed to stand on the very spot where Venulan was afterwards built.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 18.

‡ Ibid. cap. 19.

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§ Speed, quoting an old anonymous Chronicle, says, it was estimated at three thousand pounds yearly. Vide Speed's Chr. fol. 49.

been

A. A. C. 54. been demanded only to save his honour, and add a consequence to his expedition: for how could he ever expect that it should be paid by the Britons, when he neither erected one single fort upon the land, nor left one single cohort, to enforce the payment. These considerations have led several judicious authors to conjecture, that he has set his exploits in Britain in a much more favourable light than is consistent with truth; and when any one shall reflect on his unbounded ambition, and love of fame, this opinion will seem far from improbable. Besides, the expence of this undertaking we may easily conceive was very considerable; and the fatigues which he and his army underwent, far more than equal to the victories, or profits which accrued to him from it. So that the whole considered, there was but little just reason for him to boast of his enterprize; and of this himself seems to have been convinced, as he now left the island with a resolution never to return to it again.

From  
A. A. C. 54. to  
A. D. 40. From the departure of Cæsar to the invasion of Claudius, a space of ninety-seven years, we find but little authentic matter concerning the affairs of this realm: for during the whole of this time, the Britons met with no actual disturbance, and but few alarms, from foreign enemies: so that the ancient authors have either entirely neglected the accounts of Britain, or what they have said is so dispersed, and so trifling, that the most which can be collected from them will throw but a faint and uncertain light upon the transactions of this people. Thus much appears to be certain, that soon after Cæsar left Britain, and the fears of a foreign enemy were dissipated, they broached afresh their intestine quarrels; and the whole land was presently rent and torn with different factions, and civil broils.\*

Civil wars amongst the Britons.

In these wars, Cafibellanus and his successors, with their subjects the Cattivellauni, so far prevailed above the rest, that they reduced to their rule the Trinobantes, the Dobuni, and several other chief nations. Amidst this general confusion, those nations seem to have been the most grievously oppressed who had so lately submitted themselves to Cæsar, and implored his protection: for of these, the Ancalites, the Bibroci, and the Segontiaci, were so absolutely conquered, that they lost both name and consequence as distinct states, and from this time are no more mentioned by succeeding writers.†

Cunobelinus, a powerful prince.

During the reign of Augustus, there flourished in this realm a king of great repute called Cunobelinus, (and said by some to be the successor of Cafibellanus). He was by far the most powerful prince of this period, and seems to have arrived at such a pitch of grandeur and royalty, as was unknown in Britain before his time: for his rule extended over almost all the southern part of the kingdom; his chief seat was at Camulodunum,‡ which royal city is said in general by the modern authors to have been at

\* Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. i. chap. 1.

† Ibid. & Stow's Chr. & Speed's Chr.  
‡ See Camden, Speed, &c.

Maldon, in Essex. After his death, his dominions were divided between his widow Cartimandua, the queen of the Brigantes, and his two sons, Caractacus and Togodumnus, who were the most considerable princes in Britain when it was invaded by Claudius.\*

Soon after Cæsar's return from Britain, the Roman state, embroiled by civil diffensions, turned their swords against each other. During these alarming commotions, Britain was forgot, and the tribute so far from being paid, was not even demanded; and this not only during the wars, but even long after peace and quietness was established in the empire. Augustus indeed thought proper to threaten the Britons with an invasion, which, however, he never accomplished; being convinced, perhaps, that the expence of carrying on the war would be far greater than the profits he could expect to reap from the conquest; and this was what he called "Reason of State."†

Yet to add the greater terror to his threats, in the sixth year of his reign a preparation was made, and he marched his troops forward into Gaul, when he received information that the Pannonians had revolted; therefore, altering his resolutions relative to Britain, he turned his power against the rebels.‡ Thus were the Britons for a time relieved from their fears.

Four years after, he opened the temple of Janus at Rome, threatening again to invade Britain; but when he had marched as far as Ariminum, he was met by certain ambassadors, sent from several of the British states, who submitting themselves to him, humbly begged his protection, and sued for peace.§ Augustus, contented with these assurances, altered his intentions, and with his forces turned aside to quiet some disturbances which had arisen in Gaul. But as these promises were most likely only made by some few of the British states, whose interest might greatly depend upon the favour of the Romans, the whole of the tribute was far from being paid.

The emperor, apparently incensed at these delays, with great threatening made preparations a third time to punish the neglect of the Britons; but just as he was on the point of setting forward, an actual rebellion in Biscay prevented him. Thus, after all these specious appearances, the Britons still continued unmolested, and in safety. However, they seem in some measure to have been intimidated; for, as soon as they heard of the anger of Augustus, they dispatched ambassadors to Rome, excusing themselves to Cæsar, and entreating peace; they also swore fealty to him in the temple of Mars, and brought large gifts with them, which were laid up in the capitol.¶ From this time, the Britons

\* Dion. in Claud.

† Tacit. in Vita Agric.

‡ Dion. in Vita August.

§ Ibid.

¶ Dion Cass. lib. liii. I may here add, that the British Histories speak of a king,

named Theomantius, or Tenuantis, who succeeded Calibellanus. "This man, (says Rapin) sent rich presents to the emperor, which were laid up in the capitol." But what authority he had for this assertion is very uncertain.

A. A. C. 21. willingly paid tolls and imposts upon all such commodities as they purchased of the merchants.\*

A. D. 43.

Tiberius would not invade Britain.

In the same manner, Tiberius (after the death of Augustus, whom he succeeded in the empire) received the presents, and took the willing tribute of the Britons, abstaining from all hostilities. During the reign of this emperor, the Britons and Romans seem to have kept up a perfect good understanding one with the other, as we may reasonably conclude, from the tender and humane treatment which some of the soldiers of Germanicus met with, who were shipwrecked upon the coast of Britain, where they were well received by the petty kings, who ruled in those parts, and sent in safety back to their general.†

A. D. 40.

Caligula's foolish expedition.

The senseless and wicked Caligula, who succeeded Tiberius in the empire, made great preparations for the invasion of Britain; but when he had with his army proceeded as far as those parts of Holland which lie facing Norfolk, there met him some miserable Britons, who submitted themselves to him, and begged his protection. At the head of these fugitives came Admimus, the son of Cunobellinus, who had been banished from Britain by his father; but for what particular cause is not recorded. Caligula received him gladly, and wrote letters to the senate at Rome, replete with boastings, and extolling his great success, with as much confidence, as if all Britain had already been his own. Not content with all this idle vaunting, amongst other mad and extravagant exploits, he caused all his men to be drawn up in their ranks, and to be set in battle array upon the sea-shore; he also caused the balistas, and other instruments of war, to be placed in proper order, as if he was actually upon the point of engaging with the enemy: all which being done according to his command, he went himself into a galley which he ordered to put from the shore, and to proceed some small distance upon the sea; when returning again, he caused the trumpet to sound the charge of battle, and issued forth his command for every man to fill his helmet with the shells that lay upon the beach, declaring, that he had now subdued the ocean, and that those were the spoils, which were well worthy of a place in the capitol, amongst the various and honourable trophies of conquered nations. He then greatly commended the courage of his soldiers, and rewarded them profusely;‡ and after he had built a tower upon the spot, a lasting memorial of his unequalled folly! he returned to Rome, demanding a triumph for his memorable exploit.§

The security of the Britons.

Thus Britain remained a long time unmolested, notwithstanding the late preparations made by the Romans; and this last ridiculous expedi-

\* Strabo, lib. iv.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. cap. 5.

‡ Dion. lib. 59. & Sueton. in Vita, C. Calig.

§ Of this tower, says Camden, there are great ruins in Holland, but overflowed with the water, and to this day called *Bryton's*

*Honse*, in remembrance of this ridiculous expedition against Britain, where they often find stones with inscriptions; one of which had these capitals upon it, C. C. P. F. thus interpreted, Caius Caligula Pharum Fecit. Camd. Brit. Stow's Chron. Vide Speed, &c.



tion of Caligula entirely suppressed their fears, and rendered them so secure, that when Claudius (the successor of Caligula) caused an actual invasion to take place, they had neglected the making any necessary preparations; not in the least suspecting the reality of his design, until the arrival of the Roman legions convinced them he was in earnest.\*

The Britons had long neglected to pay the tribute to the Romans, and Claudius taking the province affairs into serious consideration, was determined to reduce them to obedience; and he was the more particularly moved to the commencement of hostilities by the instigation of a fugitive Briton, named Bericus, he being expelled from his native country, as a seditious and dangerous person, fled to Rome, supplicating the protection of the emperor; who, by his advice and persuasion, was entirely confirmed in his intentions. Wherefore, he sent an army over into Britain, which consisted of four legions; who, with their auxiliaries and the cavalry, amounted to the full number of fifty thousand men; and over these Aulus Plautius, a man of consular dignity, was elected general. Under him in command, was Vespasianus, (who was afterwards emperor) and his brother Sabinus, with other excellent officers. The emperor also ordered the general, that if he should meet with any great or unexpected resistance from the Britons, he should write to Rome, and he himself would come over into Britain in person to aid him.†

Aulus Plautius arriving at Britain, landed his men without any opposition from the Britons, who seemed not in the least to have suspected the reality of the emperor's design. At this time also, Cunobellinus being dead, his dominions were divided between his widow, Cartimandua, and his two sons, Caractacus and Togodumnus. Besides, the harmony which subsisted between these parties, was by no means such as might have been expected from their near relation, nor such as the safety of the realm required.‡

The two princes, however, upon the first news of the arrival of the Romans, armed their subjects, and withdrew into the woods; for it was not their design to come to an open engagement with the Roman troops, but rather to protract the time till the winter should set in, when they expected for certainty that their enemies would depart again, as Julius Cæsar with his forces had done heretofore. But Plautius presently on his arrival, marched up into the country, (guided, no doubt, by the seditious Bericus, to the places where his friends resided, and where his chief interest lay, which seems to have been mostly amongst the Cattivellauni and Dobuni) and by his direction, the Romans first came up with Caractacus, whom they defeated; and presently after, they engaged with his brother Togodumnus, whom they also overcame. These important victories obtained, great part of the Dobuni submitted to the Romans: these, most probably, were the subjects of Cogidunus, a prince beloved and esteemed.

\* Dion. lib. lx.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

A. D. 43. by the emperor Claudius, as well for his early submission, as for his steady adherence to the Roman cause.\*

Another action  
between the  
Britons and Ro-  
mans.

Plautius having first left a garrison amongst the Dobuni, pursued the flying Britons, who had taken shelter behind a large river, where they were encamped, thinking themselves well secured, as they knew the river was deep, and that there was no bridge over which the Romans could pass to attack them. But Plautius perceiving the advantage they possessed, caused some of his German auxiliaries (who were excellent swimmers) to pass the river; which they had no sooner done, than, instead of attacking the British army, they set upon their chariot horses, which they wounded and ham-stringed, rendering them entirely unfit for service. In the mean time, Vespasianus having passed the water with his troops, (unknown to the Britons) in another place, set upon them suddenly, and a vast number of them were slain. Yet the hardy Britons obstinately resisting, would not turn their backs, but maintained their ground with great bravery until the next day, when a most grievous and bloody conflict ensued; for some time the scales of victory hung doubtful, but at last the good fortune of the Romans preponderated, and the Britons, no longer able to resist, were put to flight. This conquest was chiefly owing to the valour and conduct of C. Sidius Geta; whose courage in this bloody conflict, was rewarded with triumphal honours at Rome, though he himself had not yet attained to the honour of the consular degree.†

The Britons  
conquered again.

The Britons thus defeated, made their retreat to the north side of the Thames, which they passed at a place where the marshes, and stagnated waters, occasioned by the overflowing of the river, rendered the passage both difficult and dangerous, especially to the Romans, who were unacquainted with the nature of the place; but the Germans, regardless of the danger, followed the enemy, and the rest of the Roman army passing the river over a bridge, which they found a little higher up,‡ came upon the Britons, and gave them another signal overthrow. But the Roman soldiers being too eager in the pursuit, a great number of them perished in the bogs and swamps.§ In this conflict also, the Britons lost Togodumnus, one of their chief generals, and the son of Cunobellinus.

Plautius sends  
for the emperor.

Notwithstanding the Romans had so far succeeded, and defeated the Britons with considerable slaughter; yet was there no prospect of concluding the war as yet, for the Britons far from making any advances towards a peace, or expressing the least submission, seemed only the more exasperated, and the more insatiate in their thirst of revenge: wherefore,

\* Tacit. in Vita Agric..

† Dion. lib. ix.

‡ Rapin makes the following remark upon this passage: "Notwithstanding the authority of Dion Cassius, it is improbable there should have been a ford so near the Thames' mouth, as the scene of this action

seems to have been laid; or a bridge a little higher up. He seems (adds my author) to have confounded some river, which runs into the Thames, with the Thames itself. Rapin. Hist. Eng. vol. i. book i.

§ Dion. lib. ix.

Plautius dispatched messengers to the emperor, signifying to him, that A. D. 43. his presence was absolutely necessary to put a final conclusion to the war. Claudius gladly received this summons, and having made great preparations, with a mighty army, both of horse and foot, passed over into Britain; also with his army he brought large elephants, whose strange and tremendous appearance in battle might damp the courage of the Britons.\*

When Claudius had landed his forces in Britain, he encamped near the Thames; soon after which he passed the river, and entered into the country of the Trinobantes, where he had a sharp conflict with the Britons: but in the end the British forces were totally overthrown, and the Romans got possession of Camulodunum, the chief city of Cunobellinus.† Soon after, Cæsar won several other towns and states, which were of great consequence; so that when he had received the submission of such princes as were obliged, or disposed, to seek an alliance with him, he appointed Plautius the first governor of this new province, and returned back to Rome in less than six months from his first setting out, entering the city in triumph.‡

Vespasianus (whom Claudius had left the second in command) succeeded so well in his office, that he not only acquired great esteem and honour, but laid the first foundation of his future glory and greatness. At the head of one of the divisions of the Roman troops, he carried on the war against the Belgic Britons, who inhabited the sea-coasts from Kent to the land's end. Here in the course of a few years, after thirty sharp conflicts, he subdued the Belgæ, together with the Deuotriges, two of the most powerful nations in those parts. He also took above twenty towns, and entirely conquered the isle of Wight.§ In the mean time, Aulus Plautius made war upon the inland Britons, who were commanded by Caractacus. We are not informed of the particular exploits of Plautius, but we find, in general, he was so successful, that on his return to Rome he was honoured with an ovation, or lesser triumph, the emperor walking at his left hand to the capitol.||

When Plautius was recalled in the year of our Lord 47, the direction of the affairs in this island seems to have been managed by legates, or the commanders of the legions, to the year 50, at which time, Ostorius Sca-

\* Dion. lib. lx.

† Thus says Dion. Cassius; but Suetonius affirms, that he came over into Britain, and that part of the island submitted to him within a few days after his arrival, without either battle or bloodshed; which last account seems to be confirmed by this inscription, given by Dr. Henry in his History of Britain.

TI. CLAVDIO CÆS.  
AVGVSTO  
PONTIFICI MAX. TR. P. IX.  
COS. V. IMP. XVI. P. P.  
SENATUS POPVL. Q. R. QVOD  
REGES BRITANNIÆ ABSQVE  
VLLA IACTVRA DOMVERIT  
GENTESQVE BARBARAS  
PRIMVS INDICIO SUBEGERIT.

See Wright's Travels, page 293.

‡ Dion, ut sup. & Suet. in Claud. § Suet. in Vita Vesp. || Dion & Sueton, ut sup.

A. D. 50. *pula* was deputed by the emperor to take upon him the government of Britain.

Ostorius lands  
in Britain.

Ostorius, at his first arrival, found all things in great confusion; the enemy were plundering the allies of the Romans; and they committed these depredations with the greater boldness, because they were not under any apprehensions (as the winter was now begun) that the new general would enter the field against them, at the head of troops, which he was as yet but a stranger to. But he, on the other hand, prudently considered, that a sudden check put upon their proceedings, must be every way advantageous to the Roman affairs: therefore, collecting his army together with all convenient speed, he marched forward against those who were in arms, and overcame them with great slaughter; pursuing those which fled, and were straggling abroad. And that he might render the province the more secure from the neighbouring enemies, he erected a chain of forts upon the banks of the rivers Nen and Severn; also to prevent any intestine discord, he caused all busy, or suspected persons, as well subjects as allies, to deliver up their arms.\*

The Iceni re-  
volt.

This last policy of Ostorius was the occasion of a new war; for the Iceni,† (who had very early, and of their own accord, sought the alliance of the Romans) incensed at this tyrannical command, chose rather to revolt than surrender up their arms. Wherefore, gathering all their forces, and being joined by some neighbouring states, they took the field against Ostorius, having got possession of a place encompassed with a rude high trench, and inaccessible to the cavalry; because it had but one entrance, and that was purposely made as narrow as possible. Ostorius, therefore, commanded his men to attack them in their entrenchment, which they presently entered, when an obstinate and bloody conflict ensued; but in the end the Britons were overcome, and being hampered in their own enclosures, were totally defeated; notwithstanding their desperate resistance: for seeing all the passages through which they might hope to escape entirely stopped up, they resolved to die bravely, and sell their lives at as great a price as possible. This slaughter of the Iceni fixed the wavering resolutions of many, and inclined them to peace, who waited but to see the success of this revolt; and to make their final determination, either for peace or war.‡

The Cangi o-  
vercome.

Ostorius having gained this important conquest, marched his troops against the Cangi, whose country he wasted and spoiled; the miserable inhabitants not daring to take the field against him. When he had proceeded as far as the sea-coasts which looked towards Ireland, his progress was stopped by the information which he received, that the Brigantines§ were upon the point of revolting: this he no sooner heard, than, altering his course, he marched with his army against them; where he put to

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xii. cap. 8.

† The Iceni inhabited the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, and Huntingdon.

‡ Tacit. Annal. ut sup.

§ The Brigantines inhabited Yorkshire, &c.

death some few who had taken up arms, and the rest, on promise of peace, A. D. 50. were pardoned. His next step was to secure the conquests which he had made; therefore, he planted a numerous colony of veteran soldiers at Camulodunum.\*

No sooner had Ostorius thus prudently restored peace and quietness to the southern parts of the kingdom, than fresh disturbances called him to the field again. The restless Silures,† with Caractacus at their head, (who by his prudence and valour had made his name famous) were up in arms, and threatened destruction to the Roman power. To put a sudden and effectual end to this growing evil, the Roman general, with the chief of his troops, marched towards the territories of the Ordovices,‡ for the crafty leader of the British forces having got together a numerous army, took the advantage of transferring the war from his own to another state; where, with his whole host, he waited the coming of the Romans: he was encamped in a most advantageous place, for he had fortified a strong hill,§ before which there flowed a large river, the fords of which were difficult and uncertain. Also, to prevent the soldiers from landing on the opposite banks, he placed a great body of his best soldiers by the river-side, and directly before the entrenchment. All things thus prudently disposed, he himself encouraged his men, to make a brave and noble resistance; adding, in a pathetic and animating manner, that “On the fortune of that day depended the glorious re-establishment of their liberties, or the perpetual shame of bondage and servitude.” He then invoked the names of their ancestors, who had chased Cæsar the dictator out of Britain, and by whose valour they were delivered from the impositions of the Romans, and their wives and children protected from disgrace. These words were received with repeated clamours of applause and approbation; and such was their happy effect, that glory glowed in every British breast, for every man lifted up his hand, and swore by the powers which he adored, that either death or conquest should put an end to his labours.¶

Ostorius, astonished at the valiant appearance of the Britons, as also the advantages of the post which they possessed, became doubtful of success. But the soldiers themselves loudly demanded battle, beseeching him to lead them forward to the enemy. He therefore examining what places of the river would be the least dangerous to ford, led his army thither, and they boldly rushing into the stream, made themselves masters of the opposite bank with but little difficulty. Now a fierce engagement ensued, the Britons defending their entrenchments with great bravery, threw down their darts upon the enemy; on the other side, the Romans

Caractacus opposed the Romans.

Caractacus overcome by Ostorius.

\* Tacit. An. ut sup.

† The inhabitants of South Wales.

‡ North Wales.

§ There is a hill in Shropshire, near the confluence of the Colun and Teme, called Cæar Caradoc, from Caradoc, the British

name of Caractacus, which answers exactly the description here given by Tacitus, where the vestiges of all these rampires are still visible. Camd. Brit. in Shrop.

¶ Tacit. Annal. ut sup.

- A. D. 50. perceiving that they fought to great disadvantage at a distance, pressed forward to the entrenchment under the covert of their shields, and breaking down the rude rampire of stones, attacked the Britons hand to hand, who finding themselves unable to support the close encounter with their antagonists, fled to the higher grounds, where the light-armed infantry of the Romans closely followed, and drove them from their posts with great slaughter. So ended this day's action, in the total defeat of the Britons, and advancement of the Roman glory. Amongst the prisoners which were taken in the camp of Caractacus, were his wife, his daughter, and his brothers.\*

Caractacus betrayed to the Romans.

Caractacus indeed escaped from the general ruin, but being now no longer able to make head against his enemies; forsaken and destitute, he hastened to Cartimandua, the queen of the Brigantines, to whom he relates the ill fortune of that last fatal field, imploring her to defend and protect him. But she, unworthy woman, in order to establish herself in the favour of the Romans, put him into bonds, and delivered him up to Ostorius; basely sacrificing the interest of her country, and cruelly betraying the unhappy man, who sought protection at her hand, merely to advance her own private and inglorious views.†

Caractacus led to Rome.

The unfortunate Caractacus, thus perfidiously betrayed, was, together with his wife, his daughters, and his brethren, sent to Rome. The fame of his noble struggles for liberty were not only expanded throughout all the Roman provinces, but also even in the city of Rome itself, he was spoken of with great honour. When he entered Rome, the people were assembled from all quarters to see the hero, of whom Fame had so highly spoken. He was brought into the presence of the emperor in procession, his servants going first, after them was carried the bracelets, chains, and other spoils, the silent trophies of his extensive victories over the neighbouring states; then followed his brothers, his wife, his daughter; and last of all he came himself; his greatness of mind remaining still unconquered by distress: and while others were petitioning for forgiveness, he neither held down his head, nor sued in words for mercy. When he had reached the tribunal, where Cæsar himself was seated, with an undaunted presence he spake the following words:

The speech of Caractacus to the emperor Claudius.

"If my moderation in prosperity had been equal to the greatness of my birth and fortune, I should have come to this city as a friend, and not like a captive; nor wouldst thou have disdained to receive me with articles of peace, because I am descended of noble progenitors, and I have ruled over many warlike nations. The dishonour of my present lot, is your glory: I had horses, men, arms, and wealth; what wonder then, if I was unwilling to be deprived of them? If you will bear rule over all men, why it follows, that all men must become obedient! Had I yielded myself to thee sooner, neither had my fortune, nor your glory, been made so famous; for then oblivion would

\* Tacit. Annal. ut sup.

† Ibid.

" have

" have quickly followed my sufferings. But now, if you will permit me A. D. 50.  
 " to live, I shall remain an eternal example of your clemency."

When he had finished this affecting speech, Cæsar beholding the brave-  
 ness of his conduct, was struck with admiration, and caused his bonds to  
 be taken off, pardoning both him, and his relations, who accompanied  
 him. The subduing of Caractacus was held an event of so much impor-  
 tance at Rome, that the senators refrained not to declare, the glory of  
 Rome's ancient heroes was now equalled! and to Ostorius they decreed  
 the public honours of triumph.\*

Caractacus par-  
 doned by Clau-  
 dius.

Thus far success accompanied the Roman general in Britain, and all  
 his designs succeeded. But Fortune, who seldom deals her favours with  
 an equal hand, now turned the scale, and suddenly depressed his former  
 glory. The inhabitants of South Wales, whom he thought he had en-  
 tirely subdued, boiling with revenge for the losses they had sustained, and  
 exasperated at the captivity of their valiant leader, secretly assembled a  
 large troop, and fell suddenly upon a band of the Romans, (which  
 were left behind to build fortresses in their territories) and so greatly  
 overpowered them, that if they had not received speedy succour from the  
 adjacent camps, they would all of them have been miserably slain.  
 However, there fell in this conflict, the camp-master, with eight cen-  
 turions, and a great number of common soldiers, before the Britons were  
 put to flight. From this time the Britons had several skirmishes with the  
 Romans, issuing upon them from the woods and marshes, as occasion  
 served. The Siluri seem to have been chiefly exasperated, by a rash  
 speech which the emperor is said to have dropped, importing, that he  
 would " entirely abolish their very name from Britain." In their de-  
 sperate fury, they intercepted, and overcame, two bands of Roman sol-  
 diers, who were foraging with a design to enrich themselves by the  
 spoils of the distressed Britons. Encouraged with this success, the Si-  
 lures grew more bold, and persuaded the residue of the British states to  
 revolt from the Romans, and take up arms in the general cause. Osto-  
 rius quite worn out with these continued misfortunes and vexations, and  
 seeing no end to the increasing troubles, died of a broken heart; grie-  
 ving to find those laurels, which his former conquests gained, now wither  
 on his brow.

The ill fortune  
 of Ostorius, and  
 his death.

Cæsar being quickly advertised of the death of Ostorius, immediately  
 dispatched Aulus Didius into Britain, to take the command upon him.  
 But before he could arrive, Manlius Valens, having one legion under his  
 command, imprudently attacked the Silures, and was overthrown by  
 them, with considerable slaughter. This conquest, the victorious Bri-  
 tons greatly magnified to their advantage, inviting other states to join  
 them, and continued to harass and spoil the borders of the province,  
 till the arrival of Didius altered the face of things; for he presently col-  
 lected his forces, and drove them back to their own state. Mischiefs and

A. D. 53.  
 Aulus Didius  
 succeeds Osto-  
 rius.

\* Tacit. Annal. ut sup.

A. D. 53. destruction seems with too sure a scent to have pursued the miserable Britons; for what the combined force of the Romans could not alone have done, their own imprudences and civil discords effectually completed. Cartimandua, the faithless queen of the Brigantines, divorced herself from her husband, Venusius; and not thus contented, she publicly espoused Vollocatus, her husband's armour-bearer, and proclaimed him king. Her husband, Venusius, was the chief of the Huicci,\* a brave and valiant man, and famous for his knowledge in military affairs. Till this time he had continued faithful to the Romans, and under their immediate protection; but irritated by these unjust measures of Cartimandua, he revolted from them, and with all the forces he could collect, assailed her dominions. These bickerings continued for a space between themselves alone, till such time as the perfidious queen, by treachery, intercepted the brother of Venusius. This last act exasperated the people in general, who greatly favoured the cause of the injured Venusius; and they being also fearful of her growing power, took up arms in all quarters against her, and invaded her kingdom with a great army. Matters now growing serious, and the consequences alarming, the Romans thought it high time to take the field, and protect their allies from the threatening danger: therefore, two cohorts were sent to join with the forces of Cartimandua, and a sharp and bloody battle ensued. The victory was long doubtful, but in the end, the Brigantines, with the assistance of the Roman troops, overcame the invaders, and drove them from the field. Yet this was not the end of the war, for at last, Venusius, repeating his attacks, succeeded so well, that he drove out his faithless queen, and got possession of the kingdom.†

The Britons are  
quieted.

About the same time, also, a legion under the command of Cæsius Natica fought with the Britons in another place, and was successful. After these severe strokes of ill fortune, the Britons were quiet for a time. Didius himself doth not appear to have had any hand in the conquests here made; for being far advanced in years, and having in his former days obtained many honours, he thought it sufficient for him to execute his charge, and expel his enemies by the help of others, so that he did but just preserve what acquisitions his predecessors had gained. Only, that further in the island he erected some few forts, purely for the name and opinion of having enlarged his government.

A. D. 54. Claudius Cæsar dying whilst these things were acting in Britain, was succeeded by Nero; a bloody and detestable tyrant, who was as capricious in his resolutions, as he was wicked in the execution of them. For some time he was doubtful in his own mind whether he should not recall the Roman troops from Britain, and leave the distressed inhabitants in

Claudius suc-  
ceeded by Nero.

\* The Huicci inhabited Warwickshire † Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. 10. & Hist. lib. and Worcesterhire. Vide Dr. Henry's Hist. iii. cap. 9. Brit. vol. I. chap. iii. sect. 1.



full possession of their own native freedom. But then again, his vanity A. D. 54.  
preponderated in the scale, joined with a pretended regard for the glory  
and memory of his father, Claudius.\*

The first three years of Nero's reign, Aulus Didius continued gover- A. D. 57.  
nor of Britain, and was then succeeded by Verannius, who died within a year  
after his arrival. His last will manifested his ambition, in which he be-  
stowed much flattery upon Nero; and vaunted, that if his life had been  
spared two years longer, he would have reduced the whole province to  
obedience. A vain and inglorious boast! which it is not likely he could  
have accomplished; for the whole service that he performed during the  
time of his government, was only making small inroads into the terri-  
tories of the Silures, and wasting part of their country.†

Aulus Didius  
made governor  
of Britain.

No sooner was Verannius dead, than Suetonius succeeded him in his A. D. 58.  
command. This man, during the course of two years, made war upon  
the Britons with great success, subduing fresh nations, and establishing  
garrisons.‡

Suetonius's suc-  
cess.

In his third year, he determined to invade and subdue the island of A. D. 61.  
Mona, or Anglesea, which was well inhabited, and had constantly af-  
forded an asylum for all seditious persons, who were enemies to the Ro-  
man government. The garrisons which he had erected in Britain, he  
thought would be a sufficient check upon the inhabitants, as they would  
also secure the province itself from any foreign invasion. Therefore, col-  
lecting a great army, he set forward on his expedition; and because the  
sea betwixt Britain and Anglesea is shallow, and the landing very uncer-  
tain, he caused a number of flat-bottomed vessels to be built, in which  
his infantry were transported to the opposite shore, the horses passing  
over the ford. Against them, on the other side, the British forces were  
drawn up in close array, and well furnished with weapons. Amongst  
them appeared their wives and daughters, all habited in mourning at-  
tire, running to and fro, their dishevelled hair floating in the wind, and  
brandishing flaming fire-brands in their hands. Round about them  
were seen the Druids, lifting up their hands to heaven, and pouring forth  
horrid imprecations. Amazed and terrified at such an unusual appear-  
ance, the Roman soldiers stood aghast, as marks only for the Britons to  
discharge their weapons at. But soon encouraged by the animating ex-  
ample of their chieftain, they forgot their fear, and marching boldly up  
to their enemies, encountered them so sharply, that they quickly put  
them to flight. Suetonius made a cruel use of his victory, slaughtering  
the flying Britons, and thrusting the Druids into the fires which them-  
selves had kindled. Having thus obtained firm footing on the island,

Invades the isle  
of Anglesea.

\* Sueton. in Vita Neron.

‡ Tacit. in Vit. Agric.

† Tacit. *Annal.* lib. xiv. cap. 9.

A. D. 61. he proceeded to place garrisons in their towns; he also overthrew their altars, and burnt their sacred groves.\*

The Iceni-  
ans begin a dan-  
gerous revolt.

Whilst Suetonius was thus employed in Anglesea, the Britons at home, taking the advantage of his absence, began a rebellion, so alarming in its consequences, that it threatened a total destruction to the whole body of the Romans, and ended in a prodigious slaughter on either side. The Iceni-ans seem first to have stirred in this revolt, and their example was presently followed by the rest. The chief cause which induced them to take this step, appears to be as follows: †

Cause of the re-  
volt.

Prasutagus, their king, and a faithful ally to the Romans, dying at this time, in order the more firmly to fix the peace of his state, and the better to secure his house and family from insult, in his last will made Nero joint heir with his two daughters, to all his effects. But the consequence of this measure proved directly contrary to his intention; for as he was very rich, his will was no sooner known, than his whole wealth was seized upon by the avaricious Romans, and his realm was plundered by the greedy centurions. His queen, Boudicea, a woman of great courage, remonstrating against their unjust proceedings, was taken by them, and scourged in a contemptuous manner. Not thus content, they violated the chastity of her two unfortunate daughters; the chief men of the state they thrust out of their possessions, and all the late monarch's miserable relations they reputed as slaves. ‡

The Trinoban-  
tes join the re-  
volters, and  
why.

This complication of grievances called aloud for redress, and the unhappy sufferers raised up their wretched heads, determining to make a violent struggle for the recovery of their lost liberty. Desperate in their grief, they rush to arms, and are quickly joined by the Trinobantes, another powerful nation; who, too like them, were groaning under the cruel oppression of the conquerors. With these the colony of veteran soldiers stationed at Camulodunum, were exercising their unlimited power, thrusting the inhabitants from their houses and estates, seizing upon their goods,§ and retorting the ignominious names of slaves upon those who dared to remonstrate. Some lent them money at an exorbitant interest, and then made their demands upon them when they were unable to pay, insisting upon the full restoration. And to complete their calamity, the very priests, (who officiated in a temple erected in that city, to the honour of Claudius) under the colour of religion, seized upon and wasted the little wealth, which yet remained to these wretched sufferers. || Ripened by these repeated injuries to rebellion, they rose against their tyrannical oppressors, and flocked with joyous hope of re-

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Xiphilin ex Dion Cass. lib. lxii.

|| Xiphilin, from Dion Cass. gives these reasons:—"The occasion of the war was the confiscation of goods, which had been remitted by Claudius Cæsar, and the

which Decianus Catus (the procurator of the realm) declared should be renewed. Add to this, that C. Seneca had lent them four hundred sesterces (which amount to three hundred and twenty thousand pounds of our money) upon an exorbitant interest, and with great force and violence compelled them to pay the whole sum at one payment.

venge around the standard of Boudicea; who, exasperated by her wrongs, A. D. 61. led on the Icenii in person, divesting herself entirely of the delicate effeminacy of her timid sex.

No sooner had these injured parties joined their forces, than they poured like an irresistible torrent upon the colony at Camulodunum, <sup>Camulodunum destroyed.</sup> The Roman soldiers, unable to support the onset, fled to the temple, and there defended themselves for two days; when the Britons forcing an entrance, they were all put to the sword, and the city reduced to ashes. Leaving this smoking trophy of their desperate revenge, they met with Pœtus Cerealis, lieutenant of the ninth legion, who (ignorant of what had happened) was coming (with all the soldiers under his command) to aid the colony. The enraged Britons suddenly surrounding his troops, cut off all his foot; himself with the cavalry escaped with great difficulty, flying to the camp, where he defended himself in the entrenchments.\*

In the mean time, Suetonius receiving these alarming accounts, left Anglesea with the greatest speed, when passing directly through a part of his enemy's country, he came to London, (which city yet continued faithful to the Romans;) his first intention was to stop there, and abide the coming of the enemy, but upon maturer consideration, he resolved not to coop himself up in a place so confined, but rather lead his army out upon the open plains; nor could he be won by the tears and intreaties of the inhabitants (who supplicated his protection) to stay: therefore, the signal for his army to remove being made, all who chose to accompany him, he received as part of it; but such as seemed unwilling to go, as well as those who were aged and infirm, he left behind.

No sooner had Suetonius left London, but Boudicea, queen of the Icenii, with her numerous army, entered the city, putting all whom they found therein to the sword. From thence they marched on to the free city of Verulam, (now called St. Albans) which they also conquered, taking great spoils. The success which had hitherto crowned the labours of the incensed Britons, and the hope of recovering their native liberty, added daily fresh supplies to their army; for their number, which at the first revolting amounted to 120,000, was by this time so much increased, that their forces consisted of full 230,000 fighting men; a most tremendous multitude! all fixed in their hatred to the Romans and their allies, and crying aloud for vengeance.† They retaliated the injuries they had received from their enemies with a heavy hand, for they would not sell or exchange any of their prisoners, but either killed with the sword, gibbeted, burnt, or crucified, all those who were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.‡

Suetonius having now collected the whole of his forces together, amounting nearly to ten thousand men, determined to try the fortune of a pitched battle; therefore, he chose a place which was every way safe

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

† Xiphilin ex Dion, lib. lxi.

‡ Tacit. Annal. ut sup.

A. D. 61. and convenient, at the end of an open plain, inclosed at the back with a large thick wood, and the entrance to it very narrow; so that, on the one hand, he was secured from the private ambushes of his enemies, and on the other, he was not in danger of being surrounded, and hemmed in by their numerous forces. When he had taken possession of this advantageous post, he put his men in due array for the battle, and in that position waited the approach of the Britons, who, with heroic Boudicca at their head, were now advancing towards them, thinking themselves secure of conquest; and that the revenge might be the more complete, they had brought their wives and their daughters, in waggons and carts, to behold the distress and misery which they now intended to bring upon their late insulting conquerors. Before the engagement, their queen, who was a tall and comely woman, stood in her chariot clad in her royal robes; on either side of her was placed one of her injured daughters; \* when, looking upon the surrounding multitudes, she encouraged them, in a noble and courageous speech, to fight bravely in the defence of their country. She declared to them, that their being led by a woman was far from being any disgrace; on the contrary, it was agreeable to their ancient customs: for her own part, she affirmed, that she fought neither for wealth nor dominion in the prosecution of the war, but only revenge of her repeated injuries. She shewed, that the inordinate lust of the Romans was grown to such a pitch, that even age itself could not secure their wives and daughters from shameful violation; and added, that the gods themselves had favoured their just vengeance, in permitting the slaughter of so many of those tyrants as they had already destroyed. Those who escaped, had either hid themselves in their camp, or saved themselves by flight. She then concluded, with exhorting them to exert their utmost valour, as men determining either to conquer, or to die; for, says she, "this is my resolution, who am but a woman, even though you, who are men, may wish to live like slaves." Repeated shouts, and clamours of applause, proclaimed the effect of this animating speech upon the British troops. On the other hand, Suetonius was not silent at this approaching danger, but addressed his soldiers in a just and sensible manner; exhorting and intreating them not to be dismayed at the loud and repeated clamours of their barbarous enemies, "who, (said he) notwithstanding their numbers, and security of the victory, unarmed as they are, will not be able to withstand the force of your weapons, nor your valour, who have so often put them to flight; and the smallness of our army, in comparison with the numerous multitude of our enemies, will greatly augment the glory of the victory." His soldiers heard his exhortations with joy, and by their readiness to engage the enemy, seemed to preface the approaching conquest.

When Suetonius had finished his speech, and given forth the necessary orders to his troops, they all prepared for battle, standing still in their

\* Dion, lib. lxi. & Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 11.

post until the Britons were come up, who first began the combat, fiercely assailing the Romans with their darts. The Romans abode the conflict, without quitting their stations, until the enemy had spent the greater part of their missive weapons, when the fourteenth legion sallied out upon them in a pointed battle, and being close supported by the auxiliary troops, drove them back; Suetonius then caused the cavalry to advance, who, with their long lances, broke the ranks of the enemy, and put them to such confusion, that they gave back on every side. To make the calamity the greater, the distressed Britons had blocked up all the passes with the carts and waggons, in which they had brought their women, that their flight was now impeded, so that a prodigious slaughter ensued. The victorious Romans triumphed in the horrid destruction, and so cruel were they in their conquest, that even the hapless women, who had been the mournful spectators of the overthrow of their dearest friends, to complete the revenge of these merciless conquerors, were all of them put to the sword. In the action, four hundred of the Roman soldiers were slain, and a few more wounded; but much more fatal was this day to the Britons, for of them near eighty thousand were destroyed.\*

Suetonius, before he began this decisive battle, had sent express orders to P. Posthumus, camp-master of the second legion, that he should come to him with all his troops to reinforce the army: but he, either through fear of being intercepted by the Britons in his march, or apprehensive that they would entirely subdue the Romans, neglected the orders of the general, and kept himself close within his camp. When he heard of the success of Suetonius, he was so overcome with shame and grief, that he instantly slew himself. P. Posthumus slays himself.

The miserable remnant of the Britons, who had by flight escaped from this fatal field, began now to gather head again, resolving once more to try the chance of war. But in the interim, their hapless queen, unable to support the horror of the late defeat, ended her life by poison. This last accident so damped their spirits, that the greater part of them, changing their former resolutions, dispersed themselves; and those who remained in arms were all of them easily subdued.† Boudicca poisons herself.

Evil fortune, still untired, pursued the hapless Britons; nor yet was the capacious measure of their woes filled up: for the late destructive war, was still more destructive in its dreadful consequences; as, during their troubles, they had entirely neglected the cultivation of their grain, a grievous famine ensued, which reduced them to the greatest distress. Suetonius also, cruel in his conquests, pursued the flying remnants of these miserable sufferers with unrelenting rigour. This severity of the governor, moved Junius Clafricanus, who had lately succeeded Catus as procurator, (and who was no friend to Suetonius) to propagate reports greatly to his disadvantage; declaring, that a new governor ought to be sent, who,

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 11.

† Ibid. & Vita Agric.

A. D. 61. without the malice and arrogance of a conqueror, would receive such as submitted themselves with clemency. He also wrote to Rome, that unless Suetonius should be recalled, and another placed in his stead, the war with the Britons would be endless. When Nero had received these letters, he sent Polycletus, a favourite freed-man, with a pompous retinue into Britain, to examine into the affair; and to reconcile the differences between the governor and the procurator. But his reports being more favourable concerning Suetonius than those which the procurator had made, he was for a while continued in his charge. But he, soon after, in the dispatch of some business, having unfortunately lost a few galleys upon the shore, was finally recalled, either the end of this year, or early in the beginning of the next.\*

A. D. 62. Petronius Turpilianus succeeded Suetonius in the government of Britain; a man of mild behaviour, who, as he was not well acquainted with the offences of the Britons, was the more gentle in receiving those to mercy who submitted themselves to him. During his rule, the war died away, he not attempting to enlarge the extent of the province; nor did the Britons (who now enjoyed the blessings of peace) in the least molest or disturb his quiet. After he had been three years possessed of the government, he surrendered it up to Trebellius Maximus.†

A. D. 65. Trebellius was still more unwarlike and inactive than his predecessor; for he was by no means acquainted with the management of war affairs. He maintained the tranquility of the province by a method of softness and compliance; through these means, the Britons were lulled, as it were, into a state of perfect idleness: for being of late so overcome with the toils and fatigues of war, they had, in the present moment, learned to love such vices, as humoured them in pleasure and ease. The civil wars, which now rent Rome itself, were a sufficient cause that the sluggishness of the governor was not enquired into: yet, though the Britons were by this means kept in quiet, the Roman soldiers under his command grown turbulent and licentious through their idleness and inactivity, began to murmur. These sparks of sedition were blown into a flame by Roscius Cælius, lieutenant of the twentieth legion; who, greatly disliked the governor: from private bickerings they proceeded to public dissensions; so that the army in general, taking part with Cælius, took up arms against their chief; but he, by flight, escaped their present fury. During his absence, the government of the province was managed by the lieutenant, who kept all things in peace and good order; Cælius indeed bearing the chief authority. But some time after, Trebellius resumed the command, but with an authority altogether precarious, without all spirit, and destitute of all dignity.‡

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 11.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 9. & Vita Agric.

‡ Ibid. & Vita Agric.

To reform these grievances, Vitellius sent Vertius Bolanus into Britain, to take the charge of the province upon him; but he treading in the same steps with his predecessors, there remained toward the enemy the same sloth and negligence, with the same insolent spirit in the camp: this difference only to be made, that Bolanus was a virtuous man, and subject to no hate, because he had given no reason for it; therefore, instead of gaining a proper authority over them, he only secured their affections. Throughout the whole government of Bolanus, the civil wars continued at Rome between Vitellius and Vespasian; the latter of these he seems most to have favoured: for when Vitellius sent to him in Britain, requiring him to send some of the Roman troops to reinforce his legions, Bolanus returned for answer, that "the Britons were a people so very unquiet, that they could but just be kept in order with all the forces which he had; therefore, he could not spare any, without hazarding the entire loss of the province." During all this time the Britons lived quietly in their different states.\*

A. D. 69.

Bolanus made  
governor of Bri-  
tain.

When Vespasian had thoroughly established himself in the Roman empire, he recalled Bolanus, in whose stead he sent Petilius Cerialis, who first broke in upon the peace which the Britons hitherto had enjoyed; and he struck a general terror into the several states by making war upon the Brigantines, who were esteemed the most powerful nation of the whole province. Several bloody engagements ensued; but so successful in general was the Roman chief, that he conquered the greater part of their country, and continued to ravage the rest with war and devastation: by which actions he acquired great renown and glory. He was principally assisted in his wars by the valour and conduct of Julius Agricola, who had the charge of part of the army, and fought with great success.†

A. D. 70.

The Brigantines  
overcome.

Cerialis was succeeded also by a brave and valiant man, named Julius Frontinus, who, besides the securing all the former conquests, entered and subdued the powerful and warlike nation of the Silures; and his excellent conduct was the more manifest, as he had not only the bravery of the enemy to struggle with, but also the difficulties of places and advantageous posts, which the Britons had taken possession of, from their perfect knowledge of their own country.‡

A. D. 75.

The Silures o-  
vercome.

After this governor, came Cnæus Julius Agricola, who arrived in Britain about the middle of the summer, where he found the army already retiring into their stations, imagining that the service of the year was at an end. But he being thoroughly convinced, that the honour and success of a general depended greatly on his exploits in his first setting out,

A. D. 78.

Agricola suc-  
ceeds to the go-  
vernment of Bri-  
tain.

\* Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 9. Vita Agric. ‡ Ibid.

† Vita Agric.

A. D. 78. therefore, notwithstanding the disadvantage of the summer being far spent, and the intention of the soldiers to take their ease, he determined to set forward against the enemy, and not omit the smallest occasion which offered to keep them under. The Ordovicians were the first that felt the fury of his arms, who had a little before his arrival in Britain almost totally cut in pieces a band of horsemen belonging to the Romans. This favourable essay encouraged such of them as were desirous of war to rise; whilst others, more prudent, still delayed, till they had witness of the courage and conduct of the new general.\*

The Ordovices  
overcome.

Agricola now advancing against the Ordovicians, entered their territories; but as they did not chuse to come forth upon the plains to encounter with him, he resolved to make the first attack. Notwithstanding they were possessed of the advantages of the higher ground; and because his soldiers should not have any reason for complaint, he led the way himself, at the head of the army. Animated by his bold example, with more than wonted alacrity they ascend the rising grounds, and courageously setting upon the Britons, put them to flight, pursuing them with so great a slaughter, that almost all the whole nation was now cut off. This dreadful effect of the valour and prudence of Agricola, struck such a terror into the minds of the rest of the Britons, that they chose to remain quiet, and submit themselves to him.

Anglesea sub-  
dued.

The Roman general, that he might establish his fame on still surer grounds, was not content with the conquest already gained, but resolved entirely to subdue the isle of Anglesea, (which Suetonius Paulinus had first invaded.) As this important resolution was quickly formed, when he proceeded to the execution, the want of shipping appeared to be a material objection; but this difficulty could not prevent his perseverance in his design; therefore, he caused such of his auxiliaries as knew the fords (and who were very dexterous in swimming, so as in the water at once to manage themselves, their horses, and their arms) to enter the river in the fleetest places, and make a sudden descent upon the enemy; who were struck with such consternation when they saw that neither the water itself, nor the want of ships, could stop the progress of the Roman troops, that they submitted themselves to them, and yielded up the island.

Agricola's pru-  
dent govern-  
ment.

The whole of the summer being now past, Agricola spent the winter in the reformation of such abuses as had been the causes of the war; and first began with his own family, doing nothing with partiality, but according to the deserts of men. He then eased and remitted several grievous tributes, causing an equal distribution of all public burthens; and, above all, he utterly abolished all exactions, which had been more grievous to the wretched Britons than even the tribute itself. By these means he acquired the love of the people in peace, as much as he had inspired them with dread in war.

\* Vita Agric. & infra.



When the summer was come, he assembled his army, and made sudden attacks upon the enemy, harrassing them continually from place to place in such sort, that they could not obtain the least rest or quietness. He carefully took possession of the most advantageous posts, using every circumstance in the examination of all places which seemed likely to prove dangerous, before his army was permitted to pass them. These prudent measures, as on the one hand they secured him the victory, so on the other, they so damped the courage of his enemies, that they dared not take the field against him. When he had thus reduced all things to good order, he proceeded, with the sweet allurements of peace, to secure the wavering minds of the Britons; and such an effect had these lenitive measures upon them, that several communities, which till this time had asserted a state of equality and independence, laid down their arms, submitting themselves unto him, giving hostages, and permitting forts and garrisons to be erected in their different states.\* The summer campaign being over, he spent the following winter in civil administration; privately exhorting the people, now pleased with ease and inactivity, and openly assisting them in building of temples, houses, and places of public assembly: he also caused the noblemen's children to be instructed in the liberal sciences. Allured by these flattering temptations, the Britons now began to lose sight of their antient ferocity and national customs, adopting the language and habits of the Romans.

A. D. 79.  
Agricola reduces the Britons to peace.

Not content with these acquisitions, Agricola, the third summer, pursued his conquests. Marching to the north, he discovered, and passed through, several nations, before unknown to him or his army, and came quite up to the mouth of the Tay. Nor did the Britons offer to molest Agricola during his march; relying, perhaps, on the hope, that in the winter he would return again with his army to the south. But he having thus gained footing in their territories, erected a great number of strongholds and garrisons; chusing their situation so advantageously, that every single fort was sufficient for its own defence; so that in these forts they passed the winter quite secure, although in the very midst of their enemies, who thus baffled in all their designs, abandoned themselves to the utmost despair.

A. D. 80.  
Agricola goes towards the north.

The fourth summer he spent in securing those countries which he had passed through, and taken possession of; and in order the better to effect his design, he built a line of forts directly across the narrow neck of land

A. D. 81.  
He erects forts to secure his conquest.

\* Though Tacitus has not named these nations, it seems likely that they should be the Otdini, who inhabited great part of Northumberland; the Gadeni, who possessed the mountainous parts of Northumberland, and Tiviotalde; and perhaps the Selgove, the antient inhabitants of Elfdale,

Annandale, and Nithsdale, lying along the shores of the Solway Firth. These fortresses, which he built to secure his conquests, were made (as it is thought) from sea to sea, in, or near, the tract where Hadrian's rampart, and Severus' wall, was after erected.

which

A. D. 81. which separates the friths of Forth and Clyde, exactly in that self-same place in which Antoninus Pius after erected his wall. By this means; all the fourth side of Britain was made secure to the Romans, and the unconquered northern enemies driven, as it were, into another island.

A. D. 82. In the fifth summer he coasted about upon the sea, and passed the frith of Clyde, himself leading the way in the first ship. During this cruize, he discovered and subdued several states, till then unknown to the Romans;\* when coming to that part of the country which fronts Ireland, he had a full sight of it; therefore, in these parts he also erected forts, with a view of returning when proper occasion served, in order to make an attack upon that island: and what might the more incline him to resolve upon this step, seems to have been the reports of a certain petty king of that country, who, by some domestic dissention, was expelled from thence, and taking refuge under the protection of Agricola, represented to him that the conquest of the whole island might easily be accomplished. Pleased with his accounts, Agricola received him with great shew of friendship, as imagining that he might at some time be very useful to him.

*Agricola coasts upon the sea.*

A. D. 83. The summer being now come, Agricola suspecting that the nations before would universally take up arms in the defence of their liberty, caused his fleet to be brought round to him, that it might coast about the shore, attending upon the motions of the army, who also marched close by the sea-side. The Calidonians plainly perceiving that there was now left to them no other way of preventing the advancement of the enemy than by battle, had immediate recourse to arms. The information of their coming was reported to the Romans, and there were not wanting some amongst them, who, masking their fear under the colour of prudence, advised Agricola to return back beyond the frith of Forth, and secure the army from the approaching danger within their strongholds. But he, despising their councils, resolved to abide the fortune of the field; and because he was informed that the Britons were determined to attack him in several bands, he divided his army into three parts, and thus marched to prevent his being surrounded, for he knew that they had the advantage of him, as well in numbers, as in their knowledge of the country. The Britons, on the other hand, being made acquainted with the disposition of Agricola's army, changed their own, and uniting the whole of their forces together, in the depth of the night fell upon the ninth legion, (which was weaker than the rest †) and having slain the guards, entered the trenches; the Roman soldiers overcome with sleep,

*The Britons fall upon the Romans.*

\* These were, perhaps, the *Epedii*, *Cerones*, and *Carnonacæ*, the original inhabitants of *Cantyre*, *Argyleshire*, *Lorn*, and *Lochabar*. Vide *Hist. Brit. Rom.* page 366, 367, & 369.

† The ninth legion lost all its infantry in

the fatal revolt under *Boudicea*; and though it had been recruited with 2000 legionary soldiers, and eight cohorts of auxiliaries, was not yet so strong as the rest. Vide *Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit.* vol. I.

or the general difmay, rofe not readily to oppofe the torrent, fo that the Britons had already purfued the fight even into the camp itfelf. But Agricola, alarmed by the fpies, followed clofe at the backs of the enemy, caufing his light infantry to attack them in the rear, whilft they were yet engaged; when the whole army giving a fhout, the fpirits of the foldiers belonging to the ninth legion were revived, on hearing the fudden approach of affiftance, they therefore bravely repulfed the enemy. When the rifing morn difcovered to the Britons their dreadful ftate, hemmed in, as they were, on every fide, amazement and terror fhook their very fouls; yet with desperate courage they maintained the conflict; and even at the very gates of the camp a bloody engagement enfued. The Britons in the end were totally routed, and fled to their fecret recesses in the woods and marfhes, whole friendly covert fheltered them from purfuit, or elfe this victory had been made fo complete, that with the day the war would alfo have been determined.

The Roman foldiers, elated with their fuccels, cried out to their general, that “ Nothing could now be infurmountable to their valour. They therefore defired to penetrate into the heart of Calidonia, and advance till, by a continued fucceffion of battles, they might at laft reach the utmoft confines of Britain. Thus courageous were they grown by conqueft, who, before the engagement, were defirous of making a retreat. The Britons, far from being ready to ftoop to their conquerors, were only grown more desperate; and the better to prepare for war, they armed their young men, removing their wives and children to places of fecurity; and in a general convention of the different ftates, they bound themfelves by folemn league, ratified by facrifices and offerings to their gods. Thus they mutually retired for the winter, with minds on both fides abundantly irritated.

When the fummer was begun, Agricola fent forth his navy to ravage the coafts, and terrify the enemy. Having reinforced his army with fome brave Britons, (from fuch of the fouthern nations as he could rely upon) he caufed them all to be lightly armed, and putting himfelf at their head, marched into the country of the Calidonians, advancing towards his enemies, who were already encamped on the Grampian hills.\* The Britons had now united their forces together, to the amount of thirty thoufand men in arms, and were daily ftrengthened by their friends, who flocked to them from all quarters, being defirous of revenging their injuries upon the Roman army, many of them bearing the banners of honour, which they had obtained in former wars. At their head was Galgacus, who furpaffed the reft of their leaders in courage and in birth. When the foldiers were all afsembled, he addreffed them in a brave and animating fpeech, fetting before them the fweets of liberty, and painting out the horrors of flavery in the moft dreadful and affecting terms; he

A. D. 83.

Both armies retire for the winter.

A. D. 84.

Agricola marches againft the Britons.

\* Probably the place now called Fortingall, about fifteen miles from Dunkell.

exhorted.

A. D. 84. exhorted them to fight courageously in the defence of their native freedom. They received this noble oration of their chief with loud and noisy shouts of acclamation; when presently the boldest run to the front of the army, to give the earliest proofs of their valour and resolution.

Agricola encourages his soldiers.

No less forward were the Roman legions, inspired with fresh ardour from the brave example of their warlike general; who called upon them to exert their utmost courage, setting before them the glory which they would gain by victory; as on the issue of that important day depended the honourable end of fifty years hard struggle. The soldiers joyfully heard the exhortations of their leader, and flew to arms.

Battle between the Britons and the Romans.

The armies on both sides advancing, the combat was at first begun and maintained at a distance; the Britons carefully eluded the missile weapons of the Romans, whilst they poured a torrent of their own upon them. Agricola seeing this, caused three cohorts of Batavians,\* and two of the Tungrians,† to rush upon the enemy, and come to close encounter with them, who being unused to such kind of fighting, (and also having swords very large and pointless, which were now rendered useless) they were overcome, and retired upon the hills, but being closely followed, the whole of their cavalry was put to flight; their chariots mingling with the foot, they were themselves entangled in their own bands; many of their chariots now abandoned by their guides, the horses wildly tore them through the field, beating down both friends and foes alike. The infantry of the Britons, who were standing upon the hills, and had not yet engaged, began by degrees to descend upon the plain, in order to surround the Romans, and attack their rear, whilst they urged the victory; but the watchful Agricola suspecting their intentions, sent forth four squadrons of horse (which he had kept in reserve) to engage with them; which they did so fiercely, that the Britons were repulsed, and the execution of their scheme prevented. The Roman general now turned the designs of his enemies upon themselves, for he caused those squadrons of cavalry, which fought in the front, to wheel round and fall upon the rear of the Britons, which was so suddenly done, that a vast slaughter ensued. The enemy now retreated on every side, pursued by the Romans; but some, who were too forward in the pursuit, paid severely for their rashness; for the flying parties of the Britons, when they found the companies had quitted their main body, faced about, and set upon them fiercely; when turning again, they fled to the woods. The carnage was so great, that the whole field was covered with scattered arms, carcases, and mangled limbs, whilst the ground itself was dyed with streams of blood. In the end, the Britons were totally routed, and ten thousand of their army slain; the Romans remaining victors in the field, having only lost three hundred and forty men.

The despair of the Britons.

This was a night of great rejoicing to the conquerors; but who can express the dreadful horror of the vanquished! In deep despair they wan-

\* These were the ancient Hollanders.

† Inhabitants of the countries of Liege, Cologne, &c.

der about, and from all sides the yells of the wretched women are heard; A. D. 84. wives mourning for their husbands, mothers for their children, and maidens for their parents, all in one dismal concert joined! others dragging along the wounded with them, calling to those who had escaped! On every side the rising flames were seen, the wild effects of their ungoverned grief, who rushing from their own houses, had set them on fire; flying to the caverns and lurking-places, and then again quitting them as unsafe. The next day discovered a more ample scene of conquest; profound silence reigned upon the solitary hills; around was seen the thick black smoke, arising from the deserted and flaming houses; but not one single soul was there, to be found by the scouts, so that the Romans could get no intelligence whither the unhappy Britons were fled.

Agricola having obtained this important victory, would not pursue his conquests further at the present, because the season was too far advanced; therefore, conducting his army into the territories of the Horrestians,\* he there received hostages of the inhabitants. The fleet he caused to coast round Britain, and so return to Rhutupium,† from whence it had sailed: he himself lead his army slowly through the northern states into their winter quarters. Agricola retires for the winter.

In the beginning of the next year, Agricola sent a plain and modest account of his proceedings to the emperor Domitian; who received it with all outward demonstrations of joy and satisfaction, causing the senate to decree to his honour triumphal ornaments, a statue crowned with laurels, with whatever else was bestowed instead of a real triumph. But notwithstanding Domitian carried this sunshine in his face, he was at his heart envious of the glory which Agricola had acquired, therefore he was recalled from his government during the course of the year.‡ Agricola recalled.

Agricola was succeeded by Salustius Lucullus, who, though he seems not to have acquired any great renown, could not escape the envy of the capricious emperor; for after he had held the government a short time, he was put to death at his command. His only offence appears to have been the inventing of a new kind of lance, which he called after his own name, the "Lucullan lance;" and for this pardonable piece of vanity he lost his life.§ Lucullus succeeds Agricola.

From this period there follows a chasm in the British history for better than thirty years. During the whole reigns of Nerva and Trajan, historians have been quite silent concerning the affairs of Britain. And at this distance of time, it will be no easy matter to discover whether the perfect quietness of the province was not the sole cause: however this may be, it is very likely that the Roman soldiers and their allies employed this interval in strengthening their fortresses, and making some of those A chasm in the British History.

\* Now called Angus.

† Supposed to be Sandwich haven.

‡ Tacit. Vita Agric.

§ Sueton. in Vita Domit. sect. 10.

F famous

A. D. 86. famous military ways, the vestiges of which are evident to this very day in various parts of the kingdom.

A. D. 117. At the time which Hadrian succeeded to the empire, the northern Britons (who had been for some time unruly) broke out into an open commotion: this revolt became alarming to the province, wherefore they dispatched messengers to the emperor, and he sent Julius Severus with all speed into Britain; by whose aid the turbulent ravagers were beat back, and quietness in some measure restored to the province. But before he could complete the whole of his intentions, he was recalled, and sent against the Jews, who now began to rebel.\*

Julius Severus  
sent into Britain.

A. D. 121. Soon after the departure of Severus, the revolted broke forth again, and began a very dangerous insurrection; inasmuch, that the emperor thought his presence necessary to put a final stop to these troublesome proceedings. Wherefore, attended by three legions of choice soldiers, he came to Britain; and by the prudent measures which he pursued, presently restored peace and order. He reformed many things which he found amiss; and the better to secure the Roman province from the sudden attacks and inroads of the restless Calidonians, he caused a rampart, or wall, of earth, † to be made, as a boundary of the province; from the mouth of the Tyne east to the Solway Firth on the west. Various reasons have been assigned for Hadrian's not entering into Calidonia, and reducing those nations to perfect obedience. Some affirming, that after the departure of Agricola they had again recovered their liberties; whilst others assert, that he voluntarily slighted the whole of the country, as judging it would have cost more to conquer, and keep in subjection, than it would yield profit when conquered.‡ Historians have not informed us how long this prudent emperor continued in Britain; but it is certain, that his departure was hastened by a revolt in Alexandria. He left behind him Priscus Licinius, as governor of Britain, who kept the province in peace and good order; but he was soon after recalled to prosecute the Jewish war.§

Hadrian comes  
into Britain.

A. D. 138. Hadrian was succeeded in the empire by Antoninus Pius, early in whose reign the commotion was again begun in the northern parts of Britain; for the Mæatae, a nation who formed a part of the Brigantines, and inhabited beyond the wall of Hadrian, had made fierce attacks upon the Gemonia, a neighbouring nation, and who were under the protection of

The Mæatae re-  
volt.

\* Xiphil. ex Dion, lib. lxi.

† Camden (from an ancient author) describes this wall as made of great timber planks, fixed into the ground, and joined one to the other, not unlike a hedge. Camd. Brit. in Introduc.

‡ Rapin indeed asserts, that he met with

certain old soldiers who had served under Agricola, and from them he received such unfavourable accounts of the country, that he chose not to enter it. Rapin's Hist. Eng. vol. I. book i.

§ Eutrop. lib. viii. cap. 7. Script. Hist. August. Vit. Hadrian.

the Romans. These proceedings caused such a stir in this part of the A. D. 138. province, that the emperor dispatched Lollius Urbicus into Britain, where he no sooner arrived, than setting upon the Mæatæ, he entirely subdued them :\* and after several sharp engagements, recovered the whole country as far as the isthmus which separates the Firths of Forth and Clyde. With a design to secure his conquests, and enlarge the province, (after the example of Hadrian) he, by the direction of the emperor, raised a strong rampart across the isthmus, exactly upon the tract where Agricola before had erected a chain of forts ; and this rampart he set as the utmost bound of the Roman empire in Britain.†

Marcus Aurelius succeeding Antoninus Pius, sent Calphurnius Agri- A. D. 161. cola into Britain to quiet some disturbances which were just began. It is not unlikely but that the Mæatæ, and their neighbours, who were but lately subdued, might be now desirous, if possible, to shake off their bonds. We are not acquainted with the success of Agricola ; but we may judge that it was very good, because we hear no more of this commotion during the reign of Aurelius.‡

M. Aurelius  
sends Agricola  
into Britain.

After the death of Marcus Aurelius, his son Commodus succeeded him A. D. 180. in the empire ; in the beginning of whose reign, the restless Calidonians broke the wall which Lollius Urbicus had made, and being joined by the Mæatæ, burst like a torrent upon the northern parts of the province. To quell this rebellion, the Roman general took the field against them, but his army was soon overcome, and himself slain ; the conquerors continuing their marches, and wasting the country. When Commodus was acquainted with these mischances, he sent Ulpius Marcellus (a brave and prudent general) into Britain ; on his arrival (having first restored good order and discipline to the army) he marched against the tumultuous revolvers, and, by his valorous conduct, defeated them in several set engagements, driving them back again into their own territories with great slaughter : so that they were forced to sue for peace, and for a time continued quietly within their own territories. But the success of Marcellus had like to have proved fatal to him ; for the degenerate and wicked emperor, being as envious as he was inactive, listened to the praises which were bestowed upon this excellent commander with a jealous ear ; so that soon after being recalled, he but narrowly escaped with his life.§

Marcellus sent  
into Britain.

\* This is what I take to be the true meaning of that passage in Pausanias, where he declares, that “ the emperor deprived the Brigantines in Britain of much of their land, because they had made incursions into the Genouinia, a neighbouring nation, under the protection of the Romans.” The part deprived seems to be the Mæatæ, (who

are sometimes called by the general name of Brigantines) for they appear to have lost their sovereignty by being conquered, Paus. Arcad. Digest. lib. xxxvi.

† Script. Hist. Aug. in Vita Ant. Pii.

‡ Ibid. in Vita Ant. Philof.

§ Xiphil. ex Dion. lib. lxxii.

A. D. 180. After Marcellus had left Britain, we have no certain account of his successors in the government; but that they were base and unworthy, we may easily judge, from the general discontent and mutinies which ensued in the army. It seems, Perennius (who was a great favourite of the emperor's) managed all the business of the war according to his own pleasure; and making advantage of his master's idle disposition, he took all occasions to enrich himself at the expence of the empire, disbanding such officers as were not suited for his purposes, and placing others in their stead, who were every way disqualified for the charge they filled. These unlawful measures he pursued to such a length, that an universal discontent ensued in Britain amongst the whole Roman army; wherefore, they selected fifteen hundred chief personages, whom they sent to Rome, to accuse him to the emperor: and their just complaints were duly attended to; for Commodus (beginning now to be jealous of his rising power, and fearing that his views extended farther than might be safe for him to allow) delivered him up to his accusers, who first caused him to be scourged, and then beheaded. And even this vengeance could not satisfy their insatiable hatred toward him; therefore, they slew also his wife, and his two sons, as desirous to cut off even his offspring from the face of the earth.\*

A. D. 191. Though this act of Commodus stifled for a time the discontent of the army, yet it did not entirely extinguish the spirit of dissention which prevailed amongst them; wherefore, he sent Helvius Pertinax into Britain, with orders to punish such as were discontented and rebellious. Pertinax venturing himself too far in the suppression of a tumult, was stricken down to the ground by one of the ringleaders, and left for dead; but recovering from his hurts, he at length appeased the trouble, and brought the chief offenders to justice. Yet he gained not the love and respect of the soldiers; for which cause, he earnestly intreated the emperor to discharge him from his office, which was soon after done, according to his request.†

A. D. 192. When Pertinax had surrendered up the government, Clodius Albinus was sent into Britain. This man was in such high esteem with the emperor, that he would have honoured him with the title of Cæsar; but he declined it. Some little time after his arrival, a false report prevailed, that Commodus had been assassinated at Rome; wherefore, depending upon the truth of this rumour, Albinus assembled the army, and made an oration to them, wherein he condemned the conduct and government of emperors, setting before them the conveniencies and advantages of the common-wealth. This being related to Commodus, he was vexed to his very soul, and, in great anger, sent Junius Severus to take the

Clodius Albinus  
sent into Bri-  
tain.

\* Xiphilin. ex Dion, lib. lxxii. & vide Lampridius.

† Script. Hist. August. in Vita Commod. & vide Lampridius.



rule of Britain upon him, and thrust Albinus from his office. But Commodus being actually slain soon after these resolutions were made, Claudius asserted his authority, and Severus never got possession of the government.\* A. D. 192.

During the short reigns of Pertinax and his successor, Didius Julianus, A. D. 193. Albinus kept all things in quietness in Britain; taking every method that he could to ingratiate himself in the affections of the soldiers. Albinus kept quietness in Britain.

Severus, who after the death of Pertinax, had been declared emperor A. D. 194. by his army in Germany, having slain another competitor for the empire, who had been set up in Syria, marched towards Rome, where, Didius Julianus being slain, he was received by the senate, and his title was confirmed. But now fearing the power of Albinus, whom he found stirring with ambitious views in Britain, in order to quiet this dangerous rival, he created him Cæsar, and proclaimed him partner with him in the empire. Thus for a short time all things remained in peace; but when Severus thought himself securely settled in his state, he sought all means to rid himself of Albinus: his private practices failing to take effect, he caused him to be publicly declared a traitor, and an enemy to the Roman state. When Albinus heard of these unjust proceedings, he gathered all his forces together, and entering Gaul, marched forward to Lyons, where meeting with Severus, a bloody engagement ensued: the victory falling with Severus, the army of Albinus was totally routed, and he in despair put an end to his own life. During the absence of Albinus, the government of Britain fell to Heraclitus, of whose actions we find no records left. It should seem, that either he was soon recalled by Severus, or, that the Britons did not greatly regard his management of the province affairs.†

The Calidonians taking the advantage of the weakness of the province, A. D. 198. and being joined by the Mæatæ, poured their forces through all the northern parts, and wasted the country wherever they came. To quiet these disturbances, and secure the peace of the province, Severus sent Virius Lupus into Britain to repel the invaders, and keep them within the limits of their own state. But on his arrival, finding that they were too strong for him, he prevailed upon the Mæatæ to retire, on condition of paying them a considerable sum of money for some prisoners of war, which they had taken.‡ But this step was a very unlikely one to check the progress of these free-booters; for though it kept them quiet for a time, they soon forgot all their fair promises, and broke out again, renewing their former ravages from time to time, for the space of several years; till at

\* Script. Hist. August. in Vita Commod. & vide Capitolinus.

† Xiphilin. in Dion, lib. lxxvi. & Herodian. lib. iii.

‡ Theod. ex Dion, in lib. lxxv.

A. D. 198. last, it is likely, Lupus (tired out with these continual troubles) wrote to the emperor to send over a larger body of forces, or come himself in person, to restore tranquility to the province.\*

A. D. 207. Severus, though upwards of sixty years old, and also afflicted with the gout, resolved, notwithstanding these impediments, to enter Britain himself. The love of renown was not yet extinguished in his aged breast, which joined with the ardent desire to add the surname of Britannicus to his own, were his chief motives for coming in person; his other reasons were, the continuing his army in action, and the removing his two sons from that scene of looseness and debauchery, into which they were now deeply plunging at home. The northern disturbers, when they heard that the emperor and his sons were actually upon the march towards Britain, began to be apprehensive of the consequences which might arise from resistance; wherefore, they sent ambassadors, who, at his arrival, made him fair proffers of peace. But being willing to perform some signal action, his vanity prompted him to refuse those offers, and fixed his determination to enter the north with war and force of arms. Having first regulated such matters as were amiss in the southern part of the kingdom, he committed it to the government of his younger son, Geta, whilst he, with Caracalla, (his eldest son) proceeded with their army to the north, and entered the country of the Calidonians.

The difficulties attending the march of Severus.

Innumerable were the obstacles which he found in his march; the country was full of woods, swamps, and dangerous passes; his army was constantly harassed by ambushes, and sudden attacks of the enemy, who broke out upon them from their lurking places, retiring quickly again, before head could be made against them; himself so afflicted with the gout; that he could not ride on horseback, but was carried in a litter; add to this, the constant anguish of mind in knowing himself exposed to the machinations of his wicked and unnatural son, who, impatient to obtain the empire, was striving to hasten those few last sands which yet remained of his father's life. Yet amidst all these troubles and anxieties, with wonderful presence of mind, he bore his infirmities, and made his way even into the very heart of Calidonia; cutting down whole woods, draining marshy grounds, and erecting bridges over such rivers as were not easily forded, so that all the difficulties attending his march were by degrees removed. The better to effect these important works, he divided his army into two parts; the one of which was constantly upon the watch, in order to guard and protect the other from the sudden attacks of the enemy, whilst they were pursuing their labours.†

A. D. 208. This unconquered resolution of the emperor to proceed in his undertaking, (although we are informed by a cotemporary writer, that he lost

Peace concluded with the Calidonians.

\* Xiphilin. ex Dion, in lib. lxxvi. & Herodian, lib. iii.

† Ibid.

no fewer than fifty thousand of his troops in his march) struck such a fear A. D. 208. into the inhabitants of Calidonia, that they were glad to conclude a peace, even on the hard conditions of surrendering up to him a considerable part of their country. When this peace was ratified, upon his return he surveyed the rampire (or wall of earth) which Hadrian had caused to be made; and observing that it was not by any means strong enough to prevent the irruptions of the northern enemies, he therefore began another of solid stone, which was completed in two years. This wall he raised to the height of twelve feet, making it eight feet broad, and fortified it strongly with towers and castles, at convenient distances. The vestiges of this stupendous work are yet to be seen, nearly parallel with the rampart of Hadrian, a few paces further to the north; it extended from the east near Tynemouth, to the Solway Firth at Boulnefs, on the west.\*

Having finished this laborious work, he retired to York, afflicted with A. D. 210. a cruel disease, which confined him to his chamber. During the interval, the northern nations (hearing, perhaps, of the emperor's indisposition) broke out again into an open commotion. This breach of faith so highly exasperated Severus, that, in an oration which he made to his soldiers, he ordered them to proceed to the utter destruction of the revoltors.†

Severus dies at York.

He himself was so afflicted with his disease, that he could not execute his determined vengeance with his own hand; therefore, he placed Caracalla at the head of his forces, and sent him against the Calidonians: but he not regarding the orders which he had received from his father, applied himself rather to the gaining the affections of the soldiers, than the prosecuting of the war. He took all opportunities of degrading his absent brother before the chief officers, and by fair promises fought so far to advance himself in their favour, that on his father's death (which he was daily contriving) he might be elected sole emperor, and his brother entirely excluded. In the mean time, Severus, (who, through the fidelity of his servants, had happily escaped all the machinations of his disolute son) worn out with his own infirmities, and grievous afflictions, died at York; in his last moments appointing his two sons to be his successors in the empire.‡

Caracalla goes against the revoltors.

Caracalla was no sooner informed of his father's death, than, concluding a peace with the Mæate and the Calidonians, he marched hastily to the southern parts of the province, in order to take possession of the empire: but on his arrival, he found that his brother had managed his affairs with such policy, and gained so much importance during his

Severus being dead, a peace is concluded in the north.

\* Xiphilin. & Eutrop. lib. viii. cap. 19.

† Dion Cassius informs us, that he concluded his speech with these lines from Horace:

—“ Let none your mercy spare,  
“ Let none escape the fury of the war,  
“ Children unborn shall die.”

Xiphil. ex Dion, lib. lxxvi.

‡ Xiphil. ex Dion, & Herodian.

absence,

A. D. 210. absence, that he was obliged (to his extreme regret) to share the imperial honours with him. Matters thus far agreed upon, the two brothers settling all things quietly in Britain, hastened towards Rome to be confirmed in the empire.

A chasm of seventy years in the British history.

After the departure of these two emperors, for a space of more than seventy years historians have said so little upon the affairs of Britain, that no certain or satisfactory account can be made out. From this silence we may naturally conclude, that the governors of the Roman province maintained peace and good order with their allies and neighbours; and that the Britons, inured to the yoke of their conquerors, held it more eligible quietly to endure their bondage, than strive for liberty at the expence of their ease, and hazard of their lives. So much does indolence dull and obliterate the traces of glory and the love of freedom in the souls of men; and when joined with luxury, so softens and effeminates their dispositions, that even despotism in their governors, and cowardice in themselves, may by degrees become not only familiar, but even pleasant. It is true, it requires more than common policy and cunning to effect this amazing change in the very souls of men; nor could it ever be done, without they themselves lead the way, by swallowing the gilded bait of proffered ease: for when once the mind is inured to idleness and dissipation, men become obstinate in wretchedness, and prefer the present grovelling condition to a future state of glorious liberty, if only to be purchased by repeated labours, and the hazards of war. Such is the mind, when debased with vice! So much doth this world's happiness often border upon stupidity and fond conceit.

To fill up this chasm in the British history, is not in the power of an author; it is true, some few names of the governors of Britain during this space might perhaps be collected from inscriptions; but as these alone would convey no satisfaction to the reader, they are thought of but little consequence.\*

A. D. 255. It is supposed, that some of those thirty tyrants who infested the Roman state at one time, acted their parts in Britain; this opinion has been confirmed by several of their coins being found in this kingdom.† And indeed it is very likely that it was so, but yet their actions in this part of the world were not material enough to obtain a place in the ancient records.

Thirty tyrants in Britain.

A. D. 276. In the time of Probus, there appears to have been some sudden sedition raised in Britain, which was soon appeased by Victorinus, a favourite of the emperor.‡

Sedition in Britain.

\* Vide Camd. Brit. & Horsley's Brit. Rom. p. 289, 290, 296.

† Vide Speed's Chron. who has given fix of their coins; and Stow's Annal. who says,

that Lollianus, Posthumus, Victorinus, and Tetricus, are supposed to have held Britain from Galienus.

‡ Camd. Brit. in Introduct.

When

When Dioclesian was elected emperor at Rome, he associated with A. D. 284<sup>\*</sup> him Maximianus, as partner in the imperial dignity. Early in their reign, a new set of formidable enemies infested the narrow seas, who were the Franks and Saxons, the inhabitants of the sea-coasts of Holland, and the neighbouring parts. These pirates made frequent attacks upon the borders of Britain, carrying off great booties. To put a stop to these dangerous proceedings, Maximianus sent out Carausius with the fleet, to scour the seas, and protect the province. Carausius had not been long in his office, before he was censured with injustice in the discharge of it: he was accused of attending rather to the enriching of himself, than the suppression of the pirates; for he was observed never to attack their ships when they were outward bound, but set upon them constantly as they returned, enriched with their booty. Maximianus, therefore, ordered him to be privately put to death; but he escaping the snare that was laid for him, and hearing that preparation was made against him, engaged the whole fleet in his favour, and sailed from Gaul to Britain, where he assumed the purple. In the province he behaved with such prudence and moderation, that all the army quickly declared their resolution of supporting his cause. To render himself still stronger, he entered into articles of peace with the Franks and the Saxons, taking many of them into his army, and also into his fleet. Thus reinforced, he became a formidable competitor for the imperial honours; for he was now absolute master of the British seas, and his power extended over all the Roman dominions in Britain.\*

Carausius sent against the pirates; assumes the purple.

Maximianus finding his enemy too strong to be subdued without a large fleet, chose rather for a time to compromise the matter with him; therefore, he confirmed his title as emperor, and gave him the whole government of Britain, as well as of a few ports upon the sea-coast of Gaul; all which he enjoyed with tranquility for several years. During this interval, (it is thought) he employed the time in strengthening his alliances, and enlarging the limits of the Roman province, by subduing the Mæaræ, and their neighbours. He also repaired and strengthened the wall which Hadrian had built, and added to it seven additional castles, with other necessary works.†

Carausius declared emperor at Rome.

In the mean time, Maximianus, who waited but a convenient opportunity to attack Carausius, (whom he yet held as a tyrant and usurper) intended to make war upon him; but being kept back by contrary winds, and wanting skilful pilots, his purpose was hindered. Maximianus, and his colleague, Dioclesian, soon after elected two Cæsars, Galerius Maximianus and Constantius Chlorus, who were appointed to assist them in their government, and the keeping of the provinces in peace. To Constantius fell the charge of recovering Britain. Having received his commission, he hastened through Gaul, and suddenly seizing upon

A. D. 292.

Constantius sent against Carausius.

\* Eumen. in Panegyrr.

† Aurel. Victor. lib. ix. cap. 21, 22, & Hen. Hist. Brit. chap. xix.

A. D. 292. Bulloign,\* he blocked up the haven in such manner, that it was rendered entirely useless, notwithstanding all the endeavours of Carausius to prevent him; for as this was the best harbour which he had upon the continent, he used every means to preserve it, but in vain. Constantius having obtained this important point, marched from Bulloign, and because he had not a fleet as yet sufficiently strong to make an immediate attack upon his enemy, he gave orders for more ships to be built in several ports of Gaul; and that he might not in the mean season be idle, he with his army entered Holland, and reduced to obedience such of the nations as had revolted, and entered into alliance with Carausius. Neither, on the other hand, was Carausius unemployed at home, but applied himself with the utmost diligence to make every preparation necessary for the opposing the threatening storm. But whilst things were going forward on both sides in this manner, Carausius was treacherously slain at York by Alectus, his familiar friend.†

A. D. 293. When Constantius heard of the death of Carausius, he ceased to pursue his purpose of invading Britain, and returned to Rome. After his departure, Alectus assumed the purple in Britain, and enjoyed his state unmolested for the space of three years.

*Aleclus assumes  
the purple.*

A. D. 296. Constantius was now sent against Alectus with all those preparations which had been made to attack his predecessor. Constantius, when he had collected the whole of his fleet together, divided them into two parts, intending to land his army in two several places, in order to divert the intention of the enemy. Leaving the shore in very foggy weather, he passed unseen by the great fleet of Alectus, which was hovering about the isle of Wight. Having happily escaped this danger, he with the first part of his fleet reached the British shore, where he landed his men without any opposition. His first step was to burn all the ships, as well because they should not fall into the hands of his enemies, as to make his men the more bold and adventurous, as knowing there was no hope left of escaping death, but by the conquest of their enemies. Alectus no sooner heard that Constantius had landed his troops, than he sailed from the isle of Wight, and leaving his ships, with his whole army advanced to give him battle. His march was very precipitate, and without the least order, so that Asclepioditus (captain of the guard) with a great body of forces, accidentally meeting with him in his way, set upon his straggling army, which, after a sharp conflict, he entirely routed. Alectus, who in the beginning of the battle had divested himself of his royal robes, to prevent his being noticed, was slain in the field, and lay a long time disregarded ere his death was known.‡

*Constantius goes  
against Aleclus.*

\* *Gessariacum* in Orig.

*Panegy. viii.*

† *Eutrop. lib. ix. cap. 22. Eumen.*

‡ *Eutrop. lib. ix. cap. 22.*

The remnant of the defeated army, who consisted chiefly of Franks A. D. 296. and Saxons, continued their course to London, and set upon that city with the utmost fury, hoping, when they had spoiled it of all its wealth, to make their escape from thence by sea. But fortunately for the inhabitants, the second part of the fleet of Constantius (which had been separated from him by the fog) entered the Thames, and reached the city in such a critical moment, that they saved it from the destructive ravages of the assembled foes, whom they set upon with such fury, that they were entirely overcome, and the chief part of them put to the sword. By this series of happy events, Britain was delivered from her enemies, and again united to the Roman empire, after it had been dismembered from it for the space of more than ten years: the sea was also cleared from pirates, and the free course of navigation once more restored. Neither was this success more pleasing to the Romans, than it was to the Provincial Britons, who regarded Constantius as their guardian angel, sent from Heaven for their deliverance.\*

The remnant of the army defeated.

The two emperors, Dioclesian and Maximianus, now thought good A. D. 305. to resign their state, and the glory of their condition, to taste the more perfect comforts of a private life. Their resolutions were both put in execution at one time, and the first of May was the day in which they chose to bid adieu to the empire. They were succeeded by the two Cæsars, Constantius Chlorus and Galerius Maximianus. In the division of the empire; Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul, and Britain, fell to the share of Constantius; but he, content with the honour, and not desirous of bearing such wide rule, resigned both Italy and Africa to the government of his colleague. He made his principal residence in Britain, where he was engaged in some disputes with the northern nations, the particulars of which are not known. However, on his return from Caldonia, he fell sick at York, and died July 5, A. D. 306, after he had in his last moments nominated Constantius for his successor, who escaping from Galerius, was present at his death.†

The two emperors resign their state.

Constantius was the eldest son of Constantius, and his mother's name A. D. 306. was Helena, so justly famous in ancient history for her piety, and religious performances. She is said to have been a native of Britain, and daughter of a petty king, whose name was Coil; and it is also affirmed, that Constantius was born in this kingdom: though both of these circumstances may be true, yet they are not affirmed by the testimony of any cotemporary writer. He began his reign at York, being saluted emperor by the army, immediately after the death of his father.‡ After his election, the affairs of Britain required him to make some short stay; for when he had performed the last honours to his deceased father, he proceeded

Constantius succeeds to the empire.

\* Eumen. Panegyry.

† Eutrop. lib. x. cap. 2. Vide Usser. de

‡ Eutrop. lib. x. cap. i. & Aurel. Vict. Primord. Eccles. Brit. cap. 8. in Constant.

A. D. 306. with his army to the north to finish the war against the Maratæ and Calidonians, (who now began to be called by the new names of Picts and Scots) where, compelling some by force, and paying others, he concluded peace with those nations. Having now greater things in view, he set sail from Britain, and landed on the continent, where he obtained a considerable conquest over the Franks in Batavia; he also defeated some communities who had revolted in Germany, and made both the Gauls and Germans his friends.\* When he had thus settled the province affairs, he withdrew his forces from Germany, Gaul, and Britain, to the amount of ninety thousand foot, and eighty thousand horse. With this prodigious army he set forward toward Italy in order, by battle, to assert his claim to the empire against Maxentius, son of the abdicated Maximianus, who had assumed the purple at Rome; but Constantinus defeating him in a decisive engagement, quickly afterwards reduced Italy, and became master of the world, to which this glorious conqueror restored the heavenly blessings of peace and liberty.†

Uncertainty relative to Constantinus coming again to Britain.

It is very uncertain whether Constantinus returned again to Britain after he had restored peace to the empire, which indeed is a matter of dispute, though of but very little consequence. From this time to the death of Constantinus, which happened May 22, the year of our Lord, 337, the island seems to have enjoyed a profound peace.‡

A. D. 337. After the death of Constantinus, his three sons, Constantinus, Constans, and Constantius, succeeded him. To the elder, by division, fell Spain, Gaul, Britain, and part of Germany; but he, thinking that the empire was not equally shared amongst them, and looking with a covetous eye upon the territories of his brethren, invaded those of Constans, ambitiously desiring to add them to his own. In the prosecution of the war, he fell into an ambush near Aquileia, where he lost his life, together with the greater part of his army. This unfortunate accident happened in the spring of the year 340.§

Constantinus' three sons succeed him.

A. D. 343. Constantinus thus overcome, his brother Constans seized upon his dominions, over which he ruled for a time with great prudence and discretion. He prepared a large fleet, and visited Britain in the beginning of

\* Vide Camd. Brit. in Introduct.

† Euseb. Eutrop. lib. x. cap. 4.

‡ Camden is of the opinion, that the words of Eusebius hint as much, where he says, "At last Constantinus sailed over into Britain, which is surrounded with the sea, and having overcome the inhabitants, he began to think of other parts of the world, that he might relieve those who needed his assistance." In another place, "After he had infused into his army the principles of humanity, modesty, and piety,

he invaded Britain, &c." But an excellent modern author observes, that "This is not sufficient evidence, because, (adds he) these short hints of Eusebius most probably refer to what Constantine performed here in the beginning of his reign." Which of these opinions is the most just, is left entirely to the judgment of the reader. Camd. Brit. in Introduct. & Dr. Henry's Hist. of Britain, vol. I. chap. i.

§ Eutrop. lib. x. cap. 9.



the year 343, in order to suppress the Picts and Scots, who had begun to A. D. 343. make inroads into the neighbouring province. The particulars of his expedition, or the success he met with, are not known;\* however, from the peace, which seems for a few years after this time to have prevailed in the province, it should appear that they were subdued, and reduced to quietness.

Some time after his return from Britain, he recovered from a lingering A. D. 350. disease, which had long afflicted him; when giving ear to the councils of wicked and dissolute men, he fell into many enormous vices. For the support of his unbounded extravagances, the provinces were laid under such heavy exactions, that they universally complained; nor was his behaviour at home in the least more equal, insomuch that he became so disagreeable to the soldiers, that they mutinied, and set up Magnentius against him, by whose means he was slain at Elna, in Roussillon, the 18th of January in the year of our Lord, 350. After his death, Magnentius usurped the government of Africa, Italy, and Gaul; to these, most likely, Britain also may be added.†

Constantius, when he heard of the murder of his brother, notwithstanding his affairs in the east required his close attendance, laid them aside for a time, to revenge his death upon the usurper. Wherefore, gathering a great army together, he came against him, and after a cruel and bloody engagement, routed his forces. This battle was fought at Mursa, in Panonia, the 28th of September, in the year of Christ's nativity, 351. Constantius slain by Magnentius.

Magnentius, after this defeat, sustained several other heavy losses, A. D. 353. and being at last driven to the highest pitch of despair, he shut himself up in the city of Lyons, where he executed the most horrid and bloody resolution, murdering first his mother, next all his relations, and last of all himself, to prevent their falling into the hands of his justly incensed enemies.‡ This cruel deed was perpetrated the 11th day of August, in the year 353. After the death of Magnentius, all those nations over which he had usurped the rule, submitted to Constantius; who presently after appointed Gratianus Funarius (the father of Valentinian, who was after emperor) to be the governor, (or, as he was then called, the vicar of Britain;) but Gratianus did not long enjoy the honour of his post, as in a very short space of time we find Martinus in possession of this government.§

Constantius acted not with that equality which became a conqueror, A. D. 354. but cruelly pursued even the distant favourers of the deceased tyrant with Constantius cruel.

\* The accounts of this war are unhappy lost, with the first part of the history of Ammianus Marcellus, in which it is most likely they were recorded.

† Eutrop. lib. x. cap. 9.

‡ Ibid. cap. 12. Xosim. lib. ii.

§ Ammian. Marcell. lib. xiv. cap. 5.

A. D. 354. unrelenting rigour. For this cause he sent one Paul, a Spaniard, his secretary into Britain, to seize upon all who had been concerned in the sedition, and to lay them in bonds: this mercenary servant more than executed the unjust commands of his master, and seized upon great numbers of harmless people, on the slightest suspicion. Martinus, who was now vicar of Britain, and whose soul was pierced with the cries of oppressed innocence, took their cause upon himself, and remonstrated with the inhuman officer, declaring his injustice, and beseeching him to forbear to hurt those who had not offended. Enraged at the charge of Martinus, Paul, in the height of his passion, accused him also of being confederate with Magnentius, and was proceeding to apprehend him, when he drew forth his sword, and smote at Paul, with the intention of slaying him, but missing his aim, and having no hopes of escaping the fury of the emperor for this deed, he suddenly turned the point with more certainty against himself, and falling upon it, expired on the spot. Paul now met with no farther opposition in the execution of his cruel designs; wherefore, a prodigious number being put into bonds, were carried before the emperor, all of whom were either executed, banished, or other ways grievously punished. But yet Almighty God, who had permitted the vile oppressor, Paul, to execute his purposes, at last brought the whole weight of his vengeance upon him, for he was some time after burnt alive, at the command of the emperor Julian.\*

A. D. 360. The Roman province, which, during the space of the last hundred and fifty years, had received but trifling disturbances from their troublesome neighbours, the Scots and Picts, was now in a very flourishing condition. For as the war ceased to engross their attention, wealth and plenty, the blossoms of peace, began to appear in their full lustre. Allured by this tempting prospect, the restless northern free-booters resolved now once more to enter the province, and reap with their swords the profits of the industrious. By some means or other they passed the wall of Severus, and set upon the borders of the southern nations; wherefore, Julianus (who had but lately received the honourable title of Cæsar) being governor of Gaul, sent Lupinus into Britain with a considerable army; he himself not being able to come in person, because he was at this time busied in the German wars. No sooner was the arrival of Lupinus announced to the northern ravagers, than they left the borders of the province, and retired precipitately to their own nations; which, when the general heard, he proceeded no farther than London, where using his endeavours to put all things in good order, he abode but a short time; for when he had sent some additional forces to the chief garrisons, he returned again to the continent.† The Roman army in Britain receiving this necessary reinforcement, kept their dangerous enemies in

The northern nations begin fresh disturbances.

\* Ammian. Marcell. lib. xiv. cap. 5. & † Ibid. lib. xx. cap. 1.  
Ibid. lib. xxii. cap. 3.

fuch awe during the short reign of Julian, and the ftill fhorter of his fucceffor, Jovinan, that they were fearful of making any further attacks upon their territories.

In the firft year of Valentinian, either through the negligence of the Roman army, or the greater boldnefs of the northern infurgents, a dreadful and alarming commotion was fet on foot, which threatened danger to the whole Roman province. Three very powerful bands, compofed of the Scots, the Picts, and the Attacotes,\* taking the advantage of a time when the Franks and the Saxons were plundering the fouthern coafts, poured like an irrefiftible torrent into the northern parts of Britain, faying firft Nectaridius, who had the charge of the fea-fhore, and after defeated Bulchobandes, a valiant leader of the provincial foldiers. To flop this dreadful inundation, Severus, an officer of diftinction, was firft fent into Britain, and after him Jovinus, who had purchafed great fame with his fword in the German wars. But neither of thefe chiefs had brought forces enough to quell their numerous enemies, who fwarmed from all quarters, and for the fpace of three fucceffive years continued their deftructive depredations.†

Alarmed by thefe violent proceedings, Valentinian fent Theodofius, one of the braveft and moft prudent generals of that age, at the head of a large army, into Britain. When he arrived, he found the province in a moft deplorable condition; ruin and deftruction had paved the way of the rude revoltors, who were at this time advanced as far as London: but hearing of his coming with additional forces, they retired with their booty from thence. He, without any lofs of time, quickly purfued the track which they had taken, and coming up with them, fought a fevere battle; they were foon entirely routed, and fo precipitate was their flight, that they left the whole of their vaft fpoils behind them, which Theodofius, with great juftice and goodnefs, reftored again to the original proprietors. Having obtained this fignal victory, he invited two very able men from the continent to Britain, that they might affift him in his undertaking. The one was Civilis, a prudent man, and well verfed in civil affairs; the other, Dulcitus, a valiant chief, and experienced in military matters. He fpent the winter in regulating what was amifs, and fettling the tranquility of the fouthern parts of the province.‡

In the fpring he took the field again at the head of his army, marching directly to the north. The enemy fled before him from all parts, abandoning the forts and towns which they had taken from the provincial foldiers; however, they left behind them the dreadful marks of their rapa-

\* The Attacotes were a favage people, who feem to have inhabited in fome of the moft northern parts of the kingdom. Vide

Dr. Henry's Hift. Brit. vol. I. c. iii. feét. 9.

† Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxviii. cap. 3.

‡ Ibid.

A. D. 368. cious and destructive dispositions. Theodosius continuing his march took possession of the fortifications which they had relinquished; such as were destroyed he rebuilt, and those which were damaged he repaired, placing strong garrisons in all of them, to secure them from any sudden attacks; so that by degrees he recovered the whole country as far as the wall which Severus had built. But not content with these acquisitions, he pushed his victories still further, and entered and subdued all those nations which dwelt between the two walls, driving the lawless ravagers beyond the isthmus, which separates the firths of Forth and Clyde; where he repaired the rampart which Lollius Urbicus (at the command of Antoninus Pius) had built, and made it once more the boundary of the Roman province in Britain. The limits between the two walls he reduced into the form of a province, naming it Valentia, in honour of the emperor Valens.\*

Conspiracy against Theodosius.

Having conquered and driven forth the foreign enemies, he next proceeded to repair and strengthen all the forts and garrisons throughout the province, which had been neglected during the foregoing peace. The military discipline in the army he again restored, and kept the whole in readiness to repel the forces of their troublesome neighbours. He cashiered the Arcani, a sort of light troops stationed upon the frontiers of the kingdom, to give timely notice of any approaching danger, because he found they had betrayed their trust; and he placed others in their room. During the expedition into the north, a dangerous conspiracy was formed against the life of this excellent commander; the ringleader and chief contriver of which was one Valentius, who had been banished for some enormous crimes. But happily, before his infamous plot was ripe for execution, it was discovered to Theodosius; by this fortunate circumstance, his life was redeemed from the dangerous snare of treachery. Valentius, with some few of his accomplices, were brought to justice; the rest escaped from punishment, for Theodosius would by no means permit any further enquiry to be made after them, lest, conscious of their guilt, and hopeless of mercy, they should raise a fresh disturbance in the army, to secure their own safety.†

Theodosius restores peace and tranquillity to the province.

Thus prudently did Theodosius regulate his conduct in the great charge which he had undertaken; and having now secured the province from the attacks of their foreign enemies, he set about such regulations as were necessary to be made in the government, that the connection between the Roman army and the provincial Britons might be held fast by the bond of friendship and respect. He began by reforming many abuses in the collecting of the public tribute; he also persuaded the emperor to remit some part of the tax, which he thought oppressive to the inhabitants. He then proceeded to encourage and assist the Britons in building them houses, repairing their cities, and enlarging their

\* Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxvii. cap. 8. † Ibid, b. xxviii. cap. 3.

towns: so that from a wretched scene of ruin and distress, the province A. D. 368. was in a short time restored to plenty and happiness. When this noble general had thus happily executed his commission, he returned to Rome; and soon after, Fraomarius, the king of the Buccenobants, in Germany, was sent into Britain, and put at the head of the German auxiliaries which served there.\*

After the departure of Theodosius, the Roman province in Britain en-A. D. 375. enjoyed a profound peace for several years. Their strong-holds and gar-  
rises being well manned, prevented the incursions of the Picts and  
Scots, whilst a large and powerful fleet protected the sea-coasts from the ravages of the Franks and Saxons. And still longer might this happy  
tranquility have continued, had not the provincial soldiers and the Britons joined their whole force to advance an unfortunate pretender to the empire. The cause of all this fatal disturbance was as follows:

The beginning  
of a rebellion  
against Grati-  
anus.

Gratianus, who succeeded his father Valentinian in the empire, soon A. D. 379. found himself unable to manage the government alone; it is true, his brother Valentinian was partner with him, yet being but an infant, he was not able to bear any part in the administration; wherefore, in the fourth year of his reign he associated with him, Theodosius, (the son of that Theodosius who had so valiantly restored peace to Britain) making him equal with him in the honour and management of the state, that through his assistance he might recover the declining condition of the empire. The advancement of Theodosius proved highly offensive to Maximus, who at this time was governor in Britain; for, as he thought that the service which he had done the state was equal to what had been performed by Theodosius, so also he thought that his right to the honour of emperor was at least equal to his. Inflamed with anger at this supposed insult, he determined to seize by force upon that share of honour which he thought was due to his merit: therefore, he secured the favour of the army, and so wrought upon them by fair promises, that they all declared their firm intentions of supporting him in his claim to the empire. Besides, he had so ingratiated himself with the provincial Britons, as well by his mild government, as in marrying the daughter of a British chief, that, without the least reluctance, a great body of them, the very flower of their youth, joined the army, and determined to follow his fortunes.

Maximus assumes the purple in Britain.

No sooner was he assured of their assistance, than he assumed the purple, and taking the advantage of the absence of Theodosius, who was now employed in the east, he with the whole of his army sailed into Gaul, where he was no sooner arrived, and set up his claim, than the soldiers from all parts of the continent flocked to his standard: for Grati-

The death of  
Gratianus.

\* Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxviii. cap. 3.

A. D. 381. anus was a very weak and unpopular prince, and his rule was disagreeable to the whole army; so that Maximus gained ground with such rapidity in the empire, that the emperor soon found himself deserted, and in no condition to make head against the usurper. Wherefore, destitute of friends, he fled to Lyons, and there was treacherously slain by his remorseless enemies, the 25th of August, in the year 383.

A. D. 383. Maximus now obtained all the provinces which had been under the government of Gratianus; no sooner had he taken possession of them, than he created his son Victorinus (whom he had by his British wife) Cæsar, and made him his partner in the empire. This last act so highly pleased the Britons, who came in his army, that they all of them unanimously agreed to support his cause to the utmost of their power. The young Valentinian hearing of the revolt of the army, and the death of his brother, fought to make peace with Maximus, who receiving his proposals with respect, a present agreement was patched up, and a cessation of arms ensued for a small space; also Maximus was allowed by Theodosius to assume the title of Augustus. He then settled himself in his state, at Trier, in Germany; but yet he could not long remain quiet in his possessions, for with ambitious views he marched towards Italy, hoping to intercept the young Valentinian, and seize upon his territories; but he having timely intelligence of the tyrant's design, fled with his mother to Theodosius, and persuaded him to take the field against him.

A. D. 388. Whilst these things were carrying on in the east, Maximus pursued his conquests in the west; and coming to Aquileia, all Italy and Africa submitted to him. But he enjoyed not long the honours which he had obtained; for Fortune, tired of advancing his glory, now suddenly thrust him from her favour, to make room for his mighty and renowned antagonist, Theodosius, who, partly persuaded by Valentinian, and partly moved by ambition, took the field, and coming suddenly upon Maximus, defeated him in two great battles, he himself narrowly escaping by flight, took refuge in Aquileia. But how different was his reception now, from that which he had found when he entered the city, crowned with his conquests; depressed by the severe strokes of misfortune, he, who of late was the idol of their praise, was now become the object of their contempt. Nor was this all the sufferings of this wretched chief; for the very soldiers who had vowed to support his cause, forgot their promises, and for the hope of reward, delivered him up to his enemy, at whose command he was presently beheaded, in the year of our Lord, 388.\*

The Britons  
who accom-  
panied Maximus  
settled in Gaul.

The British forces who had accompanied Maximus, were not present at these unfortunate engagements; for they, with young Victor at their head, had been sent into Gaul, where the same evil fate which fell upon

\* Vide Camden, Speed, &c.

the father at Aquileia, pursued the unhappy son; for he was slain in a A. D. 388. sharp engagement, and his forces were routed. These misfortunes were dreadfully felt by the miserable Britons, who now found themselves in the midst of their enemies' country, without a leader, without provisions, destitute of succour, and having no ships to transport them to their native home. In this truly deplorable case they wandered about, until they reached the south-west part of Gaul, where they waited in daily hopes of getting some passage to Cornwall; but this also failing them, they were obliged to make their abode with the Belgæ, who received them with great kindness; so that they never returned again to Britain, but settled finally in that part of the continent, which was then called *Aremorica*, and now goes by the name of *Britanny*, in France. In the mean time, the rumour of these misfortunes reaching the ears of *Andragatius*, who kept the seas, (and was the very man that slew *Gratianus*) he was so struck with fear, that he cast himself headlong from his ship into the waves, and was drowned.\*

Britain soon felt the fatal absence of her warlike sons, and groaned A. D. 393. beneath the oppression of her cruel enemies: for the restless Scots and Picts, emboldened by the weakness of the province, broke through their bounds, and began afresh their ravages in the north; whilst all the southern coasts were plundered and spoiled by the piratical Franks and Saxons. At this time, *Theodosius*, by the death of his colleague, *Valentinian*, became the sole master of the world. When hearing of the dangerous state of the province in Britain, he sent *Chrysantus*, a man of great valour and reputation, to its relief. This officer, (who afterwards became a bishop) expelled the enemies; and restored tranquility to the state.†

*Theodosius the Great* died on the 17th of January, in the year of our A. D. 395. Lord, 395, and was succeeded by his two sons; *Arcadius*, the elder, bearing rule in the east, and *Honorius*, the younger, in the west. When *Honorius* entered upon the imperial dignity, he was but ten years of age; for which cause, he was placed under the tuition of a nobleman, named *Stilico*, who had been the fast friend of his father, his constant companion in all his wars; and the sharer of all his glorious victories. No sooner was the death of *Theodosius* made public, and the tender years of his successor known, but like a mighty torrent, the enemies of the western empire poured in upon it from every quarter, and seemed to threaten the state with immediate ruin and destruction. Amidst this general tumult, the Roman province in Britain should hardly have escaped: their ferocious enemies, the Scots and Picts, taking the advantage of the time, broke forth again; and entering the southern parts, destroyed and wasted the country wherever they came: driven to the greatest distress,

\* Vide Camden, in *Introduct.*

† *Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. cap. 12.*

A. D. 395. the provincial soldiers fled before them, whilst they, following their fortune, made daily advances into the land, till at last, Stilico, having in some measure composed the dangerous disturbances on the continent, sent a reinforcement of troops into Britain, by whose timely assistance the revolted were suppressed, and once more driven back within the limits of their native homes.

A. D. 407. But unfortunately for the province, after the foreign enemy was quelled, their state was soon rent and torn by civil factions at home; the spirit of mutiny and discord seized upon the Roman troops, inasmuch, that regardless of the emperor, who held his rule at a distance, they elected one amongst themselves, whose name was Marcus. For a time he held his state; but soon after, the giddy multitude, in their capricious humour, pulled him from his dignity, and deprived him of his life, setting up another, named Gratian, in his stead, from whose government they expected more satisfaction. But their resolutions being as uncertain as the blasts of wind, at four months end, they also murdered him, and raised to his seat one Constantine, an officer of inferior degree. So strangely infatuated were the minds of this rebellious crew, that presaging lucky omens from the name of this soldier, was the sole cause of his rapid advancement.\*

A. D. 408. The aspiring disposition of Constantine, was, most likely, what preserved his life, and secured him the favour of his electors: for by keeping them in employ, and other prudent measures, which he seems to have pursued, he both reigned longer, and made a greater figure, than either of his unfortunate predecessors. This extraordinary adventurer, when he thought himself secure in the favour of the army, lest they should relapse, resolved to amuse their minds with great expectations; wherefore, he meditated an expedition into Gaul. For this purpose he sought all means to ingratiate himself into the favour of the British youth; many of whom he trained to arms, and enlisted into his bands. When he had prepared all things according to his wish, for this important undertaking, he with the best of all his troops, and the flower of Britain's sons, set sail, and landed on the continent. His first endeavours were crowned with great success; nor had he been long there, before he got possession of the two rich and extensive provinces of Gaul and Spain. Elated with his advancement, he fixed his seat of empire at Arles, which he called Constantia, after his own name; and declared his eldest son (who had formerly been a monk) his partner in the state. Thus far the prospect was fair before him, and all his attempts succeeded to his wish; but a short time entirely changed the scene, and all the glories which he had suddenly obtained were as suddenly eclipsed! Making an attempt upon Italy, he failed of success; and some short time after, he quarrelled with his best and

Mutiny amongst  
the soldiers in  
Britain.

Constantine's  
expedition into  
Gaul.

\* Bede. Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 115.



most powerful friend and assistant, Gerontius; which quarrel ushered in A. D. 408. all his misfortunes, for this valiant general, piqued at the ingratitude of Constantine, turned his arms against him, and intercepting his son, Constantians, he slew him at Vienna, in Gaul. Immediately after this severe stroke, Constantine himself was closely besieged in Arles, by the army of Honorius; and when the city was taken, he was there slain in the church, whither he had fled, as to a place of security, in the year of our Lord, 411.\*

After the death of Constantine, Britain yielded to Honorius, who sent A. D. 412. Victorinus thither with a powerful reinforcement, to prevent the ravages of the Scots and Picts, who had begun to make disturbances upon the borders of the province. But now the glory of the Roman empire declined apace; their enemies prevailed on every side: the continual troubles which surrounded the state, obliged Honorius to recall Victorinus from Britain, and the whole of the army with him, to his assistance. After the departure of the Roman army from Britain, the whole province was left in a very defenceless state; not only on account of their leaving the island, but also by the great emigrations of the British youth with Maximus and Constantine.†

*Victorinus sent into Britain.*

The Scots and Picts no sooner heard that the Roman troops had left Britain, than thinking themselves secure of conquest, and pushed on with the hopes of plunder, they sallied fiercely forth upon the provincial Britons. But the reception they met with was such as they did not in the least expect; for after a sharp engagement or two, they were dispersed and driven back. This victory was chiefly owing to a large number of veteran Romans, who, from their connections and possessions in the land, chose not to leave it when the regular troops were called away. These men alarmed at the approach of the lawless enemies, had encouraged and assisted the Britons to make a bold resistance in defence of their natural rights. Yet this happy effect was but a temporary mitigation of those evils which were ready to burst upon them; for their destructive foes renewed their ravages from time to time, and were continually gaining ground. The Romans who yet remained in Britain, seeing no hopes of protecting the province from their frequent attacks, and finding their situation full as unsafe as it was disagreeable, made application (joined with the Britons) to Honorius for assistance; but he having full employment for the whole of his forces, to support the tottering empire from ruin, returned for answer, that it was impossible for him to assist them; and added, that "he entirely gave up all claim to their allegiance," advising them to defend themselves by their own courage. This unsatisfactory reply, had such an effect upon the Romans, that they presently disposed of their possessions, and taking their effects with them,

*All the Romans leave Britain.*

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 12.

† Ibid.

departed

A. D. 414. departed to the continent, in search of a more quiet habitation, leaving the distressed Britons to shift for themselves.

The Britons' grief at the departure of the Romans.

With aching hearts, the wretched Britons beheld the departure of their guardian friends! with streaming eyes, they survey their native land naked and defenceless, laid open to the mercy of their barbarous enemies! They now foresaw their inevitable destruction was at hand! Various were their councils, various their resolutions, yet little comfort resulted from either! A short time soon proved how just their apprehensions were, and brought to pass those miserable calamities which they expected daily: for the Scots and Picts receiving information of this last emigration from the province, poured in their troops, and began again their wonted depredations. Sometimes the Britons fled before them, and secreted themselves in their deep recesses; at other times, endeavouring to make head against them, they were overcome, and pursued with slaughter. For, void of military discipline, and having their spirits depressed by miseries, they were at least half overcome before the engagement was begun; whilst, on the other hand, the ferocious ravagers, hardy and inured to toil, their minds flushed with the hope of plunder, bore down their opponents, and returned home laden with their spoils.\*

A. D. 416. These dangerous invasions they repeatedly made, continually advancing and extending their rout; whilst the Britons, driven to despair, sent humble supplications to the emperor Honorius, at Rome, for assistance, and promised both willingly and faithfully to hold their obedience to him. Moved with their earnest petitions, and pitying their distresses, he received these messengers very favourably; and because he was now more at leisure to attend to their complaints, than he was when they had implored his succour before, he resolved to lend them what assistance he could. Therefore, he sent immediately into Britain a whole legion of his troops, with which reinforcement he thought they might be able to repel their intruding foes.

The Britons treat Honorius for aid.

This salutary aid was received by the provincial Britons with the greatest marks of joy and gratitude; their spirits now revived again, and they prepared with ardour to accompany the Romans against their cruel enemies. Marching directly to the north, they fell upon them, and after some slight struggles, put them to flight with great slaughter, pursuing them to the utmost confines of the province of Valentia. This important service performed, the Romans advised the Britons to repair the wall of Antoninus Pius, and fortify it strongly; by which means, it was thought the incursions of the northern nations might be easily prevented, and the southern parts of the island secured from their mischievous attacks. After having given them this advice, and instructed them in the most proper method of rendering this fortification strong and advantageous,

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 12.

the Romans bid the inhabitants farewell, and returned again in triumph A. D. 416. back to Rome.\*

The Britons, flushed with their late victories, employed themselves A. D. 417. with great alacrity in the repairing the wall, as they had been advised; but, instead of building it strong and substantial with stone, they were content with raising it up with earth alone. In the mean time, the Picts and Scots lay close in their retreats; but hearing that the Romans were returned to the continent, they issued from their lurking places, and came down to the isthmus, where the new wall was made; some passed the firths in their curroghs, (or little boats) whilst others made their attack upon the wall itself; by this means they beat down an entrance, and soon gained firm footing in the province of Valentia, which they laid waste, and then proceeded as far as the wall of Severus, where entering the borders of the southern province, they spread an universal terror and confusion throughout the whole island. The Britons were now convinced, that the temporary aid which was afforded them from Rome, had only protracted, not cured, their desperate grievances. They now saw the same ruin hovering round them which they had feared before, and were again oppressed with the same despair. Having no hope left them, but from the aid of Honorius, they dispatched fresh messengers to Rome, who set forth their deep distress with so much energy, and painted the horrors of their state in such lively colours, that the emperor was moved to pity their miserable condition, and sent again another legion, under the command of Gallo, of Ravenna, to their aid.†

The Roman troops landed in Britain in autumn, when being joined by A. D. 418. what forces the provincials could collect together, they marched immediately against the enemy, who not suspecting any reinforcement from Rome, or fearing any opposition from the Britons, were busied in plundering the country. The Romans taking the advantage of their security, fell suddenly upon them, and made a prodigious slaughter. The remnant which escaped by flight returned to Calidonia, and there hid themselves in the woods and mountains, whither they were accustomed to retire with their annual booty. The Britons now seeing the rock on which their endeavours had split before, at the persuasion of the Romans gave up the whole province of Valentia; because they found the wall across the isthmus was a very insufficient fortification to protect the country; and the more especially, as the narrowness of the firths on either side made the passage in their curroghs so easy and convenient.‡

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 11. & Gildas in Hist.

† Ibid. Ibid.  
‡ Ibid. Ibid.

A. D. 419. After this resolution was formed, the army returned to the more southern wall, which Severus had built. The Romans (who now resolved to make a longer stay in the island than the legion which preceded them had done, in order to settle the peace of the province upon surer grounds) agreed to assist the Britons in the repairing and strengthening the wall in such a manner, as might resist the repeated attacks of their enemies. The Britons cheerfully and thankfully accepted of their offer, and both parties together proceeded to accomplish this important work. The whole expence was cheerfully discharged, either by private contributions, or public collections; every inhabitant willingly gave his assistance, either by his labour, or as much of his effects as he could conveniently spare; for this was a general cause, and therefore demanded a general help.\*

A. D. 420. The Romans thinking they had now secured the northern parts of the province, turned their next considerations to the sea-coasts on the south, which were often invaded, and damaged by the piratical Franks and Saxons, who infested the seas, and were now become a formidable set of enemies. To prevent their landing, close upon the shore, at convenient distances, they erected strong forts, and built several castles. After this, the Roman general gave to the Britons exact models of several kind of arms, and instructed them carefully in the use of them; and now being upon the point of taking his leave, he represented to them, that it was by no means convenient to him, or his soldiers, to return again to their assistance; therefore, he exhorted them to exert the utmost of their courage, and to stand bravely up in the defence of their native rights: "For, (added he) you are neither inferior in bodily strength, or natural endowments, to your enemies, therefore the victory will entirely depend upon your own valour; and the conquest of the day must be earned at the points of your swords." When he had finished this friendly exhortation, he embarked with his army, and set sail for Gaul, with no intentions of ever returning again. From this period ceased the Roman government in Britain, being 475 years from the invasion of Julius Cæsar, and 420 from the birth of Christ.†

A. D. 421. Gallo left South-Britain in a flourishing condition; the inhabitants were possessed of strong garrisons, and also large splendid cities, enriched with sculptures, and various specimens of Roman grandeur. The country was also well cultivated, and delightful, and through the whole province ran those justly celebrated military roads, which facilitated the travelling from place to place. Happy if that noble spirit, and love of glory, which so strongly marked the characters of their ancestors, had yet continued hereditary to their sons; without that animating ardour

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 12. & † Ibid. Ibid.  
Gild. Hist.

which glows in the soldier's breast, the victory shall hardly be obtained ! A. D. 421.  
For what avails the possession of strong places to those who have not courage sufficient for their defence.\*

For some time after the Roman troops had finally left Britain, the rapacious Scots and Picts seem to have lain quiet in the north ; but after being informed of their departure, they came from their lurking places, and passing the isthmus between the firths, entered the province of Valentia, waiting and plundering wherever they came. For the space of several years they confined their ravages to this district, carrying home to the mountains, for their winter provision, what they could not consume upon the spot, and so returning in the summer to renew their wonted spoils.†

The Scots and Picts destroy the province of Valentia.

Grown bolder, by finding no opposition made against them, they now resolved to attack the wall of Severus itself, (which had so lately been repaired and strengthened) in order to force an entry into the southern parts of the island : the fertility of the country, and the hopes of obtaining richer plunder, were the chief motives which led them to pursue this undertaking. When they approached the wall, they found it strongly fortified, replenished with garrisons, and all the ramparts filled with armed men. This formidable appearance seemed to threaten destruction to the invaders ; yet it was but in appearance : for the spirit of war, and sense of glory, seem not only to have left the Britons, but even their common reason had now deserted them. So little had they profited either from experience, or the excellent advice which they had received from the Roman troops, that some strange infatuation seems to have seized upon them, and made themselves the instruments of their own destruction. Instead of setting proper centinels in every convenient post, whose watch might be relieved at certain stated times, and planting guards, to prevent their being suddenly surprized ; these unthinking people had posted the whole of their army upon the ramparts, from the first moment they received intelligence of the enemy's intentions ; where they had all of them abode, both day and night, waiting their approach, until they were worn out with continual watching, distressed by hunger, and benumbed with cold. Such was their condition at the approach of the enemy, who were come upon them fresh from their plunders, with every advantage on their sides. Animated with the hopes of conquest, and fearless of danger, the ravagers marched up to the wall, and began the onset with prodigious fury ; on the other hand, the Britons gave back, intimidated, and were unable to resist them ; whilst, with hooks and other destructive instruments, they tore them trembling from the wall, and slew them in prodigious numbers. Finding the resistance

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A. D. 426. so faintly kept up, the plunderers renewed the assault, and soon broke down a passage through the rampart, and entered upon the borders of the southern nations; whilst the affrighted Britons fled on every side, and were fiercely pursued by the Barbarians, who, without remorse or pity, destroyed all that they found in their way. They employed the whole summer in plundering the country; at the end of which, enriched with the spoils, they joyfully returned to their secret recesses in the north, where, with their wives and families, they spent the winter in revellings, at their ease. These unwelcome visits, they forgot not to renew with the spring, for several years, driving the wretched Britons from their houses and possessions, and carrying off all their effects with them to their own homes.\*

The miseries of the Britons described.

The miserable Britons, driven from their estates, now fled from before their cruel enemies, wandering about the country, secreting themselves in woods and caverns, without any other means of subsistence than what they obtained by hunting, and slaying the wild beasts of the field; or else by setting upon such of their own countrymen as the common enemy had spared: so that the whole southern part of Britain became one general scene of ruin and confusion; inasmuch, that it was hard to determine which was the most dangerous enemy, the lawless northern plunderers, or the wretched natives themselves, now grown desperate, and driven to the highest pitch of despair.†

A. D. 446. For near twenty years was the southern parts of the island wasted and destroyed by the merciless Picts and Scots; during which time, the unfortunate inhabitants had wandered from place to place, oppressed with indigence, and groaning beneath the ponderous burthen of their afflictions, without the least expectation of any effectual help, until the fame of Aetius, governor of Gaul, reached their ears, which revived a transitory gleam of hope in their minds, that through his aid they might be freed from the barbarity of their oppressors; and restored to peace; the loss of which they had so long lamented, the loss of which they had so cruelly felt. The better to effect their purpose, they sent ambassadors to Aetius, with mournful letters, addressed to him in this manner: "To Aetius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons." In which they painted their deep distress in the most lively and feeling terms, concluding the whole in the following pathetic stile: "The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea forces us back again upon the barbarians; in these dreadful extremities, death awaits us equally on both sides; either we must fall by the swords of our enemies, or else be drowned in the swelling waves." But, alas! their rising hopes of comfort were soon suppressed, by the refusal of the governor to assist them; for, at this time, his forces were all employed in services of much greater consequence to the Roman empire; wherefore, however striking their complaints, might be, the most he could afford them was pity and compassion.‡

The Britons sue to Aetius, governor of Gaul, for aid.

\* Gildas Historin, & Hist. Ninii.

† Bede, ut sup. cap. 13.

‡ Ibid. & Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. c. 12.



Oppressed with grief, the unfortunate ambassadors return to Britain, A. D. 447. and relate with tears their want of success. Who shall paint the horror of the surrounding natives? Deprived at once of their last beam of hope, and left in all the tortures of despair! The wretchedness of their state was augmented by their grief; and their daily increasing miseries hung heavy on their thoughts! And, add to all these dreadful misfortunes, an intolerable famine began now to prevail amongst them: so that in these affecting extremities, some retired to their solitary caverns, and mourned in secret; some crossed the seas to Gaul, and sought protection with their countrymen, in Acremorica; some fled to North and South Wales: and others took refuge in Cornwall and Devon; dispersing themselves on all sides, and leaving their whole possessions to the mercy of their intruding enemies. The remaining part, grown desperate in their distress, issued from the woods and caverns, whither they had retreated, and set upon the enemy with uncommon fury, often depriving the spoilers of their spoil. This success of a few parties, led others to follow their example; so that the ravagers, at last wearied out with continual skirmishes, retreated back, and by degrees left the country, returning home to their own states, where for a time they remained quiet. This transient and unhopd for appearance of peace, was quickly seized upon by the distressed Britons, who, leaving their solitary retreats, descended upon the plains, and applied themselves with the greatest diligence to till the land: so plentifully was their industry repaid, that the famine, before so grievous amongst them, was presently mitigated; and, in the end, by repeated endeavours, abundance once more blessed the state. When the Britons were thus happily delivered from their troubles, could any one expect to find them so dull and stupid, as not to foresee of how short continuance this dawn of peace was like to prove, because it sprung from no certain, or solid principle. Surely, if they had in the least reflected on the cause of their enemies' retreat, they would rather have found it to have proceeded from their want of spoils equal to their troubles, than the fear of the British arms: of course it must naturally follow, that wealth and plenty would soon induce them to return again, and renew the war, since the hope of plunder was the only motive which urged them to the battle; the repeated instances which the Britons had seen of this important truth, should have taught to have kept up good order and military discipline, whilst the fair occasion offered, in order to secure, by force of arms, the profits of their laborious toil. But so blind were they to their own welfare, that careless of the future danger, they resolved to seize upon the present happy moment, to riot in the plenty which they now enjoyed! They quickly forgot the Being to whom they owed their preservation, and gave themselves up to idleness and vice! At the same time, a dreadful pestilence began to rage in the land, which spread such sudden destruction amongst them, that the living were scarcely sufficient to bury the dead. Though thus oppressed and weakened; though thus laid open to the fresh invasion of their enemies; like men obli-

The desperate  
state of the Britons.

A. D. 447. nately determined upon their own total destruction, they still followed their inordinate sluggishness, until they had filled the measure of their woes top full.\*

A. D. 448. But now approached apace the fatal time, in which the total downfall of the miserable Britons should be made complete! The northern spoilers returned again to their wonted depredations, and a tumultuous fear overwhelmed the southern nations. Raised by their approaching ruin from their lethargic slumber, they soon beheld the fatality of their errors; and dreadfully lamented their mispent time! To heighten the terror of their apprehensions, a report did now prevail amongst them, that the Scots and Picts had collected the whole of their power, and entered into a strong confederacy together, entirely to root them out from the south of Britain, and plant their own northern tribes in their possessions. However true or false these reports may have been, they seem to have had a surprising effect upon the minds of the timorous Britons; for they presently called a grand council of all their different states, in order to consult upon the most likely means to stop the threatening danger. After many considerations, and much debate, one of their kings, and a man who seems to have borne the greatest sway in the council, named Vortigern, in an evil and ill-fated hour, rose from his seat, and after declaring, that he thought they could not of themselves withstand the irresistible torrent of their enemies, proposed to them, that they should call in the Saxons, a brave and hardy people, to their assistance. The advice of this chief was received with joy by the surrounding multitude, who were all ready to catch hold of the least hope of succour, without once giving themselves the trouble to reflect upon the consequences, or weigh the danger which might result from such an imprudent step.† From this general approbation, the matter was quickly resolved upon, and ambassadors sent with letters to the Saxons, to implore their assistance.‡

The

\* Gildas Hist.

† Ibid. & vide Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 14.

‡ Witichindus has given us the letter of the Britons to the Saxons, in the following abject style: "Most noble Saxons, "We, the wretched and distressed Britons, "worn out by the constant incursions of "our cruel and merciless enemies, and because we have heard of the fame of those "glorious victories, which by your valour "you have obtained; therefore have we "sent our humble suppliants to you, to "implore your kind assistance. We have "large and plentiful possessions, abounding with every necessary; these, with

"ourselves, we submit to your disposal, "if you will generously lend us your succour against our inveterate foes. Long "have we enjoyed the sweets of peace "under the powerful protection of the "Roman arms, and now we know none "second in glory to them, but yourselves: therefore, to you we lift up our "hands for assistance, and in return are "willing to abide whatever service you "shall impose upon us." But surely, however distressed the Britons might be, they never would have debased themselves in such a groveling manner. It is far more likely, that Witichindus composed this letter for them, than they for themselves;

The Saxons gladly accepted these invitations from the Britons; for, as A. D. 449. they lived entirely by the spoils which they seized upon from others, a fair occasion seemed now to offer, by means of which they might enrich themselves. Wherefore, receiving the messengers with every mark of friendship, they promised them that they would shortly come to their assistance with a powerful army, and protect them from the ravages of their enemies. The Britons received this answer from their ambassadors with the greatest demonstrations of joy and satisfaction. They now supposed that their deliverance was at hand, and were highly pleased at the happy success of their councils. Thus blinded with their own fatal errors, they foresaw not the dreadful storm which was gathering over their heads, replete with ruin and destruction.\*

In the mean time, the Saxons, elated with the hopes of plunder, prepared themselves to perform the promises which they had made to the Britons; and sent a considerable reinforcement into Britain, under the command of Hengist and Horsa, who were brothers, and born of a noble lineage, tracing their pedigree from Woden, one of their chief gods, as all the German heroes at that time were accustomed to do. They landed with their forces in three long ships, called keels,† upon the isle of Thanet, in the year of our Lord, 449, and were joyfully received by Vortigern, and the rest of the Britons.‡

The Saxons promise help to the Britons.

The Saxons land in the isle of Thanet.

as also may be the case in the following answer of the Saxons: "Know ye, that the Saxons are the Britons' friends, and ready at all times to assist them; return ye, therefore, back, and make your countrymen glad with these joyful tidings." Nennius and others, say, the Saxons were not invited by the Britons, but being exiled from their own country, landed here. However this may be, it is certain that they were well received by the Britons.

\* Witichindus, Gest. Sax. lib. i.

† Versteegan quoting Pomarius, assures us, that, at this first arrival of the Saxons, there came nine thousand men, under the command of the two warlike chiefs. But Heitor Boetius makes their number to be ten thousand, and says, they came in thirty ships, or gallies. Verif. Relit. of decayed Intellig. cap. v. page 116.

‡ Wm. Malmf. Gest. reg. Ang. lib. i. cap. 1, &c.

## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T II.

*From the Arrival of the Saxons to the End of the Heptarchy.*

**T**HE joyful Britons quickly appointed a residence for their new-come friends, resigning to them the isle of Thanet. And now, because the Scots and Picts were continuing their hostilities in the north, Vortigern intreated his allies to take the field against them: and they, desirous of shewing their valour, by some great exploit, readily agreed to his proposal; wherefore, joining their forces with the British army, they presently began their march towards the foe, who were now advanced as far as Stamford, in Lincolnshire, where the two armies met, and a sharp engagement ensued; but through the valour and conduct of the auxiliary Saxons, a complete victory was obtained, and the northern ravagers were put to flight with prodigious slaughter. This important conquest gained the Saxons such great credit with Vortigern, and the whole community of the Britons, that they looked upon them as their guardian angels, sent from Heaven to succour them in their distresses.\*

A. D. 450.

The Saxons  
overcome the  
Scots and Picts.

Hengist and Horsa seem, from their first setting out from Germany, A. D. 452. to have formed the design of settling themselves in Britain;† and now, perhaps, the fertile and pleasant appearance of the country, as well as the unwarlike disposition of the inhabitants, were the grand

Fresh aid sent  
for them Ger-  
many.

\* Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii. Will.  
Malms. & alia.

† Gildas Hist. cap. 23.

and

A. D. 452. and irresistible temptations which confirmed at once their former intentions. Seeing how high they stood in the favour of the king, and the people in general, their next step was with smooth and guileful speeches, under the mask of sound friendship, to prevail upon them to invite a second band of troops from Germany; by whose assistance they might be able to secure the kingdom from all its enemies, and raise its peace upon a lasting basis. Allured by the tempting prospect of ease and quietness, the heedless Britons readily entered into the subtle proposals of the Saxons; and accordingly messengers were instantly dispatched by the brother chiefs to their native land, inviting their friends and relations to come over into Britain, and partake with them the spoil of the country.\*

A. D. 453. Fired at the animating sound of war, and eager for the plunder, the valiant German youth assembled together, and accepted of the fair invitation from Britain, with fierce and clamorous acclamations of joy: they flocked from every quarter, and uniting together in a large company, embarked on board sixteen ships;† when, loosing the flying sails, they cheerfully set forward on their voyage, following the fortune of the two-warlike brothers, and big with the expectations of their future rewards. On their arrival in Britain, they were received with open arms by their countrymen, and soon made acquainted with the promising prospect which lay before them. With this last warlike band, came Rowena, the daughter of Hengist, who was a young sprightly damsel, in the full bloom of her beauty, of which she possessed an uncommon share. The British king no sooner saw this lovely virgin, than he was so deeply enamoured with her person, that, regardless of his fame, or the dangers which were likely to arise from such an imprudent step, he resolved to take her to his bed; wherefore, gaining the consent of her father, contrary to the advice of his chief friends, he instantly made her his wife;‡ and this action was the more justly censured by the murmuring Britons, because she was of a foreign stock, and also a heathen. Hengist overjoyed at the advancement of his fortune, and now grown more bold in his demands, petitioned the king to grant him a larger quantity of land, for the residence of himself and his army, than what had been hitherto allowed for them. His petition was instantly complied with, and all Kent was given into his hands. Though these proceeding of the king were in the highest sense distasteful to the people, yet all their remonstrances were in vain; for Hengist and his followers continually gained ground in his favour, and every day advanced their footing in the land:

\* Nenrii, Hist. cap. 36, & Will. Malmf. lib. i.

† The Scottish writers say, that this second reinforcement consisted of five thou-

sand men, who came over in eighteen ships.

‡ Nenn. Hist. & Malmf. ut sup.

The Saxons perceiving that the eyes of the Britons began to open A. D. 454. upon their designs, and finding their murmurs continually increased, resolved at once to secure their fortune, and resolutely hold the territories which they now possessed: but because they did not think themselves sufficiently strong as yet, to enter into open hostilities with the Britons, Hengist once more had recourse to his subtle persuasion; intimating to the king, that if he would permit him to send fresh messengers into Germany, he would invite his brother Oëta, and his son Ebuſſa, to come over into Britain, and bring with them a powerful reinforcement; adding further, that through their assistance, the British dominions might be greatly extended, by the entire conquest and subjugation of the Scots and Picts.\* The prospect of extending his rule, without the trouble of conducting a tedious war, was so flattering to the lazy ambition of Vortigern, that he presently consented to the proposal of the guileful Saxon, and empowered him to send again into Germany for aid. Messengers were quickly dispatched, and agreeable to the invitation of Hengist, the two chiefs embarked with their army, and coasting about Britain, arrived at the Orkney islands, where they landed, and did much mischief; passing from thence into Northumberland, they settled there; where they continued for a long time, not as an independent state, but as subjects to the kings of Kent.†

More assistance  
sent for by the  
Saxons.

Woeful experience soon confirmed the suspicions of the Britons, relative to the faithless Saxons; and they plainly saw that the obstinacy of their king would end in their ruin: wherefore, repeating their murmurs, they proceeded to threatenings, so that discords and clamours rose on all sides. Hengist and his brother seeing that the people were not to be pacified by their arguments, and assurances of peace, pulled off the mask of friendship, and declared themselves the enemies of the British state. In the mean time, the last party of Saxon troops, who were settled in Northumberland, entered into a firm league with the Scots and Picts; and joining the whole of their forces together, spread like an inundation from the north. The wretched Britons, unable to resist, fled in confusion from their houses and possessions, some taking refuge in the woods and solitary places; others fly to the rocks and mountains, or seek to hide themselves in vaults and caverns, where they felt every pinching want, and experienced the full extent of worldly woe. In this distress, they wandered about in search of their miserable sustenance, more like ghastly spectres from the grave than human beings! Others, more provident, gat them to the sea-shore, and collecting together what vessels they could, sailed into Gaul, and sought protection amongst their friends in Brittany. Whilst the rest, driven to despair, come down from their forlorn habitations, and submit themselves to the yoke of their cruel con-

The Saxons  
unite against  
the Britons.

\* Malmſ. lib. i. Mat. West. sub anno 453. † Ibid.

A. D. 454. querors; and even this ungracious mercy was prized as a superlative favour, for many of these hapless wretches were put to death.\*

A. D. 455. During all these dreadful mischances, Hengist, and his brother Horsa, were not idle in their territories in Kent; for having openly made a breach of their faith, they set upon the Britons in the southern parts of the kingdom, where they met with great resistance; for the chief leaders of the British states, when they found that Vortigern was deaf to all their remonstrances, had deposed him from his authority, and set up Vortimer, his eldest son,† a brave and valiant man, under whose banner they prepared to take the field; and being joined by numbers of the miserable fugitives from all quarters, their army was daily increased, so that calling upon God to assist them, they advanced against their enemies, and despaired not of success. Hengist and Horsa, when they heard that Vortimer was coming against them, collected all their troops, and kept themselves in readiness to give him battle. Both armies met in a place called Eglesthorp, (now Aelford, in Kent) where, after a sharp and grievous engagement, it was hard to determine which had the advantage. However, if the Britons were not absolutely overcome, they were at least so weakened, that they judged it prudent to withdraw themselves for a time from Kent: neither was Hengist in condition to pursue them. This battle is made famous by the deaths of two chief personages; Horsa, brother to Hengist, on the part of the Saxons; and Catigern, brother to Vortimer, on the part of the Britons.‡

A. D. 457. Hengist, after the death of his brother Horsa, sent into Germany for farther assistance; and employed himself with the greatest diligence in strengthening his army, during the time which the Britons let him be at rest. When two years had elapsed, Vortimer, having reinforced his bands, returned into Kent, and met the forces of Hengist, who was accompanied with his son, Æsc, at Creecanford, (now called Crayford) where a severe encounter ensued; but finally the Saxons got the upper hand. In that unfortunate field, the Britons lost four of their chief

Another battle  
between the Britons  
and Saxons.

\* Witichindus, Gest. Sax. lib. iii. Gild. Hist. Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 15. et alia.

† Neither Bede nor Gildas make any mention of this prince; and by Henry Huntingdon, he is said, with his brother Catigern, to have been at the battle of Aelford, but under the conduct and command of Aurelius Ambrosius; to whom the leading of the following engagements also are attributed. The Saxon Chronicle gives the honour to Vortigern himself, but Nennius ascribes it to Vortimer, as also does Ethelward, Malmesbury, and the chief of our ancient historians. Hen. Hunt. lib. ii.

Chron. Sax. Nennii, Hist. cap. 45. Ethelward, lib. i. Malmesbury, lib. i. & Mar. West. sub anno 454.

‡ Malm. Ethelward, ut sup. & Mar. West. sub anno 455. Some have written that Hengist fought three times this year with the Britons, and being overcome, he retreated to the isle of Thanet, and the Britons recovered Kent; and after that, Hengist fled into his own country for more help. Verstegan is of opinion, that he was not forced, but went voluntarily thither for further assistance. Hen. Hunt. lib. i. Verstegan, 129.

leaders,

leaders, besides four thousand of their common men.\* Vortimer, with A. D. 457. his remnant of the army, fled before the Saxons, leaving Kent with all the speed they could, and gat them to London. This last unfortunate blow, struck such a damp into the souls of the Britons, that they dared not for a long time return into Kent; so that Hengist was left to possess his state unmolested for several years. Immediately after the success of this last battle, Hengist, who hitherto had contented himself with the name of *beretogen*, or general, now assumed the title of king, and began his rule over Kent, the first kingdom of the Saxon heptarchy, eight years after his first arrival into Britain.†

\* Ethelward, & alia, ut supra.

† Hen. Hunt. lib. i.



## H I S T O R Y

OF THE

## K E N T I S H S A X O N S .

**K**ENT, the first kingdom possessed by the Saxons, contained all that part of the country, which to this day bears its original name. It stretched from the Eastern Ocean to the river Thames, its boundary on the north; to the south-west, its borders were terminated by the counties of Surry and Suffex.\*

*The Acts of HENGIST, the first SAXON KING of KENT, continued.*

From  
A. D. 457. AFTER Hengist had assumed the title of king, he bore rule over the  
to  
A. D. 465. whole district, without any interruption from the Britons, for the space of several years. At this distance of time, as well as from the confusion in which the accounts of this extraordinary man are found, it will be impossible to trace out the whole of his political proceedings. In this lamentable obscurity are buried many important facts, which, could they happily be recovered, would lead us to make the several periods complete, and finally settle many interesting disputes relative to several of the chief transactions. In the same unfortunate confusion are the matters concerning the Britons, and their proceedings: as well as in respect to the commanders, under whose banners they were led to the battle. Two fierce encounters between the Britons and Saxons have been recited above, and are attributed, together with two more that follow, to the prowess of Vortimer, by some, and those respectable authors; whilst others give Aurelius Ambrosius † the honour of first leading the Britons to the field against their faithless foes. However this may be, it is certain, that under the command of one, or both, of these chiefs, the Britons entered Kent again, in the year of our Lord, 465, ‡ eight years after their last battle, and fought with the Saxons at a place

\* Vide Camden in Brittan. vol. I.

† Gildas Hist. cap. 25. Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 16. and see a preceding note, page 66. Some have imagined, that Vortimer and Aurelius Ambrosius were but one and the same person: if this could

be proved, it would at once clear up the obscurity; but as it cannot from ancient authority, it must remain in its still doubtful state. Vide Hollinghed's Chron. vol. I.

‡ Chron. Sax.

called Wippeds Fleet: this was a sharp and bloody engagement on both A. D. 465. sides, so that the victory was long doubtful; but in the end, Hengist and his followers prevailing, the Britons were driven from the field. The Britons had divided their host into twelve divisions, at the head of every one of which was placed a leader, under the command of the chief general; all these leaders, as well as a prodigious number of common men, were slain before they made their retreat.\* Yet this victory was by no means pleasing to Hengist and his party; for though they had gained the upper hand, yet had they lost a great number of their best troops, as also one of their chief captains, named Wipped, from whom the place where the battle was fought, obtained its name.†

The loss sustained on either side was so severely felt, that for the space A. D. 473. of eight years they kept themselves quiet; the Britons not daring to molest the Saxons, whilst on the other hand, the Saxons seem to have been too weak to fall upon the Britons: but this interval they employed in sending for succour from Germany, and strengthening their forces. In the year 473, the war was again begun, and Vortimer, at the head of his Britons, invaded Kent, and at a place near the sea-side, called Colmore, he met with the Saxons, under the conduct of Hengist, and his son, Æsc, when another sharp conflict ensued: in the beginning, the Saxons had the most favourable prospect of victory, as being possessed of an advantageous post; but during the course of the battle, they were, by degrees, drawn from thence, when the Britons rallying their forces again, set upon them afresh, and beat them back with great slaughter, pursuing them to the isle of Thanet, where they fled, and took refuge in their ships.‡

Fourth battle  
between the Britons  
and Saxons.

Soon after this last battle, Vortimer departed this life, hastened, as it A. D. 474. is thought, by the machinations of Rowena. And no sooner was his death publicly known, than Vortigern, (who, during all these dangerous disturbances, had hid himself closely in Wales) shewed himself again to his subjects, and either by force, or crafty persuasion, prevailed upon them to re-establish him in the kingdom. In the mean time, Hengist, hearing that Vortimer was dead, and that Vortigern had again re-assumed the reins of government, and trusting to the power which he had over him, came from Thanet, where he had privately strengthened his army, and took possession of his former dominions. And because he found that he had not succeeded so rapidly as he expected by the force of arms, he was determined to try the effect of treachery and deceit: wherefore, he sent ambassadors with a shew of peace to Vortigern, who made pro-

The treachery  
of the Saxons.

\* Chron. Rossensis, MS. in bib. Cott. insig. Nero, d. ii.

† Ethelward, Hist. lib. i.

‡ Some have affirmed, that it was now

that Hengist returned to his own country, and did not come back again to Britain until the death of Vortimer.

A. D. 474. mifes of great things, and pleaded hard that a day might be fixed, when they might meet on both fides as true friends, in order to compofe the fatal difturbances which had hitherto prevailed, and eftablifh a lafting cordiality between them. Thefe fair propofals deceived not only Vortigern himfelf, but all his court; fo that the Saxons obtained their ends, and a day was appointed by the Britons, as alfo a place pitched upon for the meeting, which was the plains of Ambri, near Salifbury. On the day fixed for the final negotiation of this important bufinefs, (which was in the month of May) the Britons and Saxons met together. The former relying on the faith and affurance of peace of the latter, came into the field unarmed, and proceeded in a friendly manner to begin the confultation; the latter alfo received them with chearful countenances, and the fame appearance of good-will. But on a fudden, in the midft of the bufinefs, Hengift arofe from his feat, and gave the watch-word\* to his companions, who instantly drew forth every man a long knife, which he had concealed under his garment, and fet upon the defencelefs Britons: and fo certain were they in their cruei design, that three hundred of the chief perfonages of the realm were flain.† Eldol, a brave nobleman, (and faid to have been the governor of Chefter) feeing the treachery of the Saxons, caught up a large ftake which accidentally lay in his way, and made fuch a brave refiftance, that after he had killed and wounded feventy of his enemies, he made his efcape from the reft.‡ Hengift had ftrictly forbid his party to make any attempt upon the life of Vortigern, wherefore, in the beginning of the mafacre, he was feized upon and kept fafe; and for his ranfom, he was obliged to give up to Hengift, the counties of Effex, Suffex, and Middlefex.§ This fatal blow made fuch an impreffion upon the fpirits of the Britons, that, fufpecting the dreadful confequences which might arife from the death of their chief nobles, they fled again to their fecret receffes in the woods and caverns.

A. D. 476. Incenfed at thefe treacherous proceedings of the Saxons, and the weaknefs of their king, who, befides his fluggifh difpofition, is accused of committing inceft with his owndaughter, thofe of the Britons, whose fouls yet retained fome sparks of native glory, rofe up againft him, and chaced him into Wales; advancing to the kingly dignity, Aurelius Ambrofius, a valiant man, and of Roman origin. || Encouraged by the hope which they placed in the valour and conduct of this chief, the fugitive Britons came from their fecret places, where they had taken refuge, and with one confent, imploring the affiftance of Almighty God, flocked around his ftandard. His firft ftep was to march into Wales againft Vortigern, who

The dreadful  
death of Vorti-  
gern.

\* This word was Nimeð Eupæ Seaxer, that is, draw forth your Seaxes, or daggers. Nennii, Hift. cap. 47 & 48.

† Ibid.

‡ Mnt. Weft. fub anno 461. & Ra-

nulph Higden, Polychron. lib. v.

§ Nen. Hift. cap. 48.

|| Gild. Hift. cap. 25. Bede, Ecclef. Hift. lib. i. cap. 16.

had retired amongst the mountains, where he built a strong castle, and A. D. 476. fortified the entrances in such a manner, as he thought would resist the repeated attacks of his enemies. When Aurelius approached the castle, he girt it round with a close siege; and after a short space, by casting brands of fire into it, burnt it to the ground; and Vortiger, with all his adherents which were shut up with him, perished in the flames.\*

When Aurelius had completed his expedition in Wales, a new and A. D. 477. unexpected alarm called for his immediate assistance; for a fresh band of Saxons, tempted by the success of their countrymen, had lately sailed from Germany, and were landed in Suffex, where they had overcome the Britons, and slain their leader. This dangerous evil called for a present remedy; wherefore, with all his forces, he marched directly towards the enemy, to put, if possible, a final stop to their advancement.† But as the success of his arms, and the proceedings of these late-come enemies, who now founded the kingdom of Suffex, will be fully related in the history of that kingdom, it is thought proper to omit them here, and pass on to the affairs which relate to Kent alone.

The beginning of the kingdom of Suffex.

Aurelius was called back from pursuing the advantages which he had A. D. 488. gained in Suffex, by the rapid progress that Hengist was making in the kingdom; who had passed through the very heart of it, and was got beyond the Humber, spoiling the country as he went. Aurelius following closely at his heels, came up with him at a place called Massabel, where both armies fought, and a very bloody battle ensued, which ended in the total overthrow of the Saxons.‡ After this, Aurelius fought another battle with the same success, against Hengist and his party, upon the banks of the river Dune. Tired out with these unfortunate chances, Hengist returned into Kent, where, remaining peaceable for a time, he departed this life in the year of our Lord, 488.§

The death of Hengist.

Hengist had three children, two sons and one daughter. The eldest was Hatwaker, who is reported to have been duke of the Saxons in Germany, and left in that station, to govern them in the absence of his father; from whom the noble family of the dukes of Saxony is said to have taken its origin.¶ Also was his second son, who accompanied him into Britain, and was his constant companion in his wars; and after his death, suc-

The children of Hengist.

\* Gild. Hist. cap. 25. & Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 16. Some say, that it was burnt by lightning from Heaven.

† Matthew of West.

‡ It may not be improper here to take notice of the various opinions amongst the ancient authors, concerning the death of Hengist; for Matthew of Westminster, the author of the Chron. Rossensis, and others, affirm, that he was taken either at, or soon after, this battle, by Eldol, earl of Che-

ster, and conveyed to Connesbury, and there beheaded at the command of Aurelius: but by what we may judge from Gildas, Bede, Ethelward, &c. as well as from the positive affirmations of Marinus, Florentius, the monk of Worcester, and other authentic writers, it appears more likely, that he died honourably at home.

§ Sax. Chron. sub anno 488.

¶ Petrus Albinus, in General. Hist. &c.

- A. D. 488. ceded him in the kingdom of Kent. His last child was a daughter, named Rowena, greatly esteemed for her beauty; she was, as has been before observed, married to Vortigern, king of the Britons, by whom he had one daughter, who, as she grew to woman's estate, increased in beauty and personal perfections; her charms so strangely bewitched her lustful father, that contrary both to the laws of God and nature, he took her to his bed; from this horrid incest sprang a son, who was named Faustus;\* in disposition directly opposite to that of his wicked parents, for as he grew up, he devoted his life to virtue and religion.

*ÆSC, the second KING of KENT.*

- A. D. 489. The peaceable reign of Æsc. AT the death of Hengist, Æsc, his son, appears, with his army, to have taken refuge in the city of York, where Aurelius Ambrosius pursued him, and planted a close siege before the walls. Fortune favouring the attempts of the Britons, Æsc was expelled from thence, and fled into Kent, where he was joyfully received by his countrymen, and proclaimed king, in the room of his deceased father.† From the time of his election, to his death, there is but little recorded of this prince; perhaps, owing to the profound peace in which he held his government: for as he was less ambitious of the uncertain glory of war than his father, he contented himself with securing those dominions which he already possessed, rather than running the doubtful chance of enlarging his boundaries, and extending his rule.‡ And if he forbore to assault the Britons, they were to the full as backward in giving him occasion: for Ambrosius, and his successor, Arthur, had their whole time taken up in endeavouring to suppress the rising danger in other parts of the kingdom; for, besides those Saxons who had taken possession of Suffex, (as has been before observed) a fresh party of them arrived on the western coasts of Britain, and had made their footing sure.

- A. D. 495. The kingdom of Wexsex began. These last-mentioned Saxons came under the conduct of Cerdic, and his son, Kenric, in the year of our Lord, 495; and this same year they began the kingdom of the West Saxons.§ But to return to the affairs of Kent.---Although the rule of Æsc was so mild and equitable, he failed not to gain the favour of his warlike and turbulent subjects; for, in honour of him, the Saxon kings of Kent, who succeeded him, were called Æscings for a considerable time after.|| He reigned twenty-four years in peace, when he died, and left his kingdom to his son.\*\*

*OCTA, the third KING of KENT.*

- A. D. 513. Octa repairs Tang castle. OCTA succeeded his father, Æsc, in the kingdom of Kent; and, like him, he seems to have governed the dominion in peace. He repaired

\* Nennii, Hist. cap. 52. & Polychron. lib. v.

† Nen. Hist. cap. 62.

‡ Will. Malmf. lib. i.

§ Chron. Sax.

|| Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii, cap. 5.

\*\* Chron. Sax.

and fortified the castle of Tong, and placed therein a strong garrison of A. D. 513. men, to guard the adjacent country.\* This castle, which stood but a little distance from Sittenbourn, (where the earth-works are yet to be seen) was built by Hengist, his grandfather; and here, it appears, that Vortigern first saw the beautiful Rowena, being invited by her father to a banquet.†

In the reign of this king, Erchwine, a noble Saxon chief, with a A. D. 527. large party of soldiers, came from Germany, pursuing the fortunes of their countrymen who had settled in Britain, and landing in the eastern parts of the island, began the kingdom of the East Saxons.‡ Yet Erch-<sup>Kingdom of the East Saxons be-  
gun.</sup> wine bore not his rule as over an independent state, but as feudary to Osta, king of Kent.

After that Osta had reigned peaceably two and twenty years, he died in the year 535, and left the kingdom to his son, Hermenric.

#### HERMENRIC, the fourth KING of KENT.

HERMENRIC succeeding to the kingdom, held it the space of twenty- A. D. 535. five years in peace, when he died, and left the crown to Ethelbert, his son.§ He had also one daughter, whose name was Rikell; she was married (in her father's life-time) to Sledda, the second king of the East Saxons.<sup>Hermeric rules in peace.</sup>

In this king's reign, Ida came into Northumberland with a powerful A. D. 547. reinforcement, and taking upon him the title of king, began his reign in that district. ||<sup>Kingdom of Northumber-  
land begun.</sup>

#### ETHELBERT, the fifth KING of KENT.

ETHELBERT was very young when he succeeded his father Hermenric A. D. 560. in the kingdom of Kent. The surrounding Saxon states, taking the advantage of his youth, set upon his territories, seeking to add them to their own. But yet, with the assistance of his friends and noblemen, he weathered through the boisterous storm, and held his dominions with great honour.\*\*<sup>Ethelbert's youth and troubles at his entering the king-  
dom.</sup>

The first battle which he fought, and the first that was fought between A. D. 568. the Saxons themselves, was against those of Wessex, under the command of Ceauline, their king, and his valiant son, Cuth. Ethelbert had passed the bounds of his own kingdom to meet the foe, and was come to a place called Wibbandune, where the enemy were prepared for the engagement.<sup>Ethelbert over-  
come by the W. Saxons.</sup>

\* Scala Chronica, lib. i.

† See Lambardes Peramb. of Kent, page

245.

‡ Henry Hunt, lib. ii.

VOL. I.

§ Polychron. lib. v.

|| Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3.

\*\* Ibid. lib. i. cap. 1.

A. D. 568. which proved a desperate and bloody one: the end was unfortunate to Ethelbert; for his whole army was defeated, and two of his chief commanders, Oslac and Cnebban, were slain in the field; so that he was glad to save himself, and the remnant of his soldiers, by flying precipitately back again into Kent.\* But notwithstanding this heavy misfortune, he neglected not to defend the borders of his realm, and when he had gained more experience in war, and had advanced in years, he prevailed against all the Saxon states round about him, on this side of the Humber, reigning with greater glory than any one of his predecessors.†

A. D. 575. At this time began the sixth kingdom of the heptarchy; for Uffa, a valiant man, coming from Germany, entered the eastern parts of Britain, which he subdued; and assuming to himself the title of king, called his dominions the East Angles.

A. D. 585. Now begun the seventh, and last, kingdom of the Saxons, called Mercia; which was the largest in circuit, and contained more counties than any of the rest. Its first king was Crida, a brave and valiant chief.‡ But to return to the affairs of Kent.

A. D. 594. Ethelbert having fixed his throne in peace and tranquillity, his next step was to contract an alliance with Chilperic, the king of France; and he married his daughter, whose name was Berta, a Christian lady. By this means it pleased God, of his mercy, to lay the first foundation of the Christian religion, which so soon after began to flourish in the land: for one of the special articles of the agreement between her father and her husband, was, that she should be permitted to use the laws and rites of her church. What by her persuasion, and the counsels of Letardus, a Christian bishop, who accompanied her from France, the king's mind was turning towards the true faith; which was the reason that he so readily granted Augustine the permission of preaching to the people, and was himself so easily converted.§

A. D. 616. King Ethelbert, after he had gloriously reigned over the Kentish Saxons the space of fifty-six years, exchanged his mortal crown for one more desirable, the 24th of February, in the year of our Lord, 616, and was buried in a church which himself had founded, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, near Canterbury, by the side of Berta, his queen, who died some time before him.||

After the death of his first wife, Berta, he was again married, but the name of his second consort, who out-lived him, is buried in oblivion.

\* Chron. Saxon.

† Will. Malmf. lib. i. cap. i.

‡ Hen. Hunt. lib. ii.

§ Bede, lib. i. cap. 25.

|| Bede, Ecclef. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 5.

Happy for her, if her wicked marriage with her son-in-law, Edbald, A. D. 616. after the death of Ethelbert, her first husband, had also been forgot.\*

Ethelbert had two children by Berta; his first wife; a son, named Ed-<sup>The issue of</sup> bald, who succeeded him in his kingdom; and a daughter, called Ethel-<sup>king Ethelbert.</sup> burga, surnamed Tace, a lady of singular beauty and piety, who was afterwards married, in the reign of her brother Edbald, to Edwine, king of Northumberland, whom she converted to the Christian faith.†

## OF THE SAXON HEPTARCHY.

Now we have seen the rise of seven distinct kingdoms of the Saxons, <sup>Names of the</sup> who divided the greatest part of South-Britain amongst them. The <sup>seven Saxon</sup> names of these seven monarchies, were, Kent; Suffex, or the South Saxons; <sup>kingdoms.</sup> Wessfex, or the West Saxons; Eastfex, or the East Saxons; Northumberland; the East Angles; and Mercia; all of which will be treated of distinctly; to every kingdom its own particular history.

Another observation may be necessary to be made, that, though the <sup>Different Ger-</sup> whole of those numerous supplies which came from Germany, are con- <sup>man nations set-</sup> stantly called by the general name of Saxons; yet they were composed of <sup>tling in Britain.</sup> three different nations: the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes. The Jutes took possession of Kent, the isle of Wight, and some small part of Wessfex; the Saxons inhabited Eastfex, Suffex, and Wessfex; the Angles settled themselves in the kingdoms of the East Angles, of Mercia, and Northumberland.‡ Also, the reader is wished to take notice, that Northumberland was sometimes divided into two separate dominions, Deira and Bernicia, making then, in fact, eight kingdoms. Thus Matthew, the monk of Westminster, in the year of our Lord, 586, reckons up eight Saxon kings, all of them cotemporary; as Ethelbert, in Kent; Cissa, in Suffex; Ceauline, in Wessfex; Crida, in Mercia; Ercwine, in Effex; Titillus, in the East Angles; Ella, in Deira; and Ethelfred, in Bernicia.§

Notwithstanding (as we have seen) the Saxons had set up seven inde- <sup>One kingdom</sup> pendent states, each of them having within itself a sovereign command; <sup>supreme above</sup> yet one of them always seems to have been supreme above the rest, if <sup>the rest.</sup> not in absolute power, at least in glory and honour; and to the king, of whatever state had the superiority, was given the title of "King of the English men.||" This supremacy did not succeed from the father to the son, or always continue in the same kingdom, without reversement; but always that king who had the greatest power, or gained the

\* Bede, Ecclef. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 5. & Malmf. lib. i. cap. i.

† Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 9. Here I may remark, that Capgrave, the legend writer, gives Ethelbert another daughter, whose name he calls Edburga, and says, she was a nun in the monastery of Minster, in the isle of Thanet, where she died, and was

buried; and that her body was afterwards removed by Lanfranc, to his church of St. George, at Canterbury. Caff. in Vit. Edburg.

‡ Bede, Ecclef. Hist. Malmf. &c. &c.

§ Mat. Weil. sub anno 586.

|| Bede, Ecclef. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 5.



A. D. 616. greatest success in war, was the heir to this honorary title: so that one particular nation alone did not obtrude upon their neighbours, but all of them, at times, had their share of the glory.\*

The possessions  
of the Britons.

At the establishment of the heptarchy, the Saxons had by degrees over-run the greatest and best part of Britain; but yet the natives possessed a large tract of land on the west, extending from Land's End to the firth of Clyde; the inhabitants were all of one religion, and used the same language, being in all respects but one and the same people; yet they were not universally governed by one prince, for the land was divided into four considerable states, or principalities, as Cornwall, South Wales, North Wales, and Cumberland; each of these districts had its own prince, who was the person of chief authority amongst them, and head over the separate clans; as the head of each clan was a sort of sovereign over those who were under him: and it was these princes, who, as their disposition led them to war, from time to time made inroads into the heptarchy, and fought frequently against the Saxons, with great variety of success. Of these princes we have scarce any satisfactory records; for, though several authors have set themselves down seriously, to make out a complete series of them, in a regular succession, yet their accounts (after all the pains they have taken) are so very suspicious and uncertain, that they cannot afford the least satisfaction to a reader, who wishes to see nothing but truth in the history of his country. Thus much we may be assured of, that when these kings were not employed in foreign wars against their general enemy, they were either disturbing their own communities with civil broils, or making inroads into the bordering territories of their neighbours; so that the miserable inhabitants felt little of the comforts of peace and tranquility; or, if they did, it was so transitory, that it may be said only to make them more wretched, by giving them a taste of a blessing, which they were not destined to enjoy.

The characters  
of five British  
kings.

Five of these tyrants are mentioned by Gildas, the British historian,† as living in his own time, and cotemporary with each other. The first of these was Constantine, whom the author grievously accuses of perjury, adultery, and other horrid crimes; summing up the whole, with his cruel murder of two royal youths, together with their governors, even before the holy altar. These unfortunate young men are said to have been sons of Mordred, the former king of that district, over which Constantine now usurped the sovereignty; and therefore, he seems, by their deaths, to have made his way to the throne.‡ The second was Aurelius Conan, not in the least better than the former; him the author accuses as a murderer of his nearest relations; as lascivious and adulterous; as a hater of peace, and a follower of injustice, declaring his

\* At the end of heptarchy, a regular list is given of the English monarchs, in which, at one sight, the reader may see the succession of this honourable title.

† Gildas, in his epistle.

‡ Mat. West. sub anno 543.

thirst for civil wars, and greediness for spoils, unjustly taken from their A. D. 616. possessors. The third was Vortiporus, a wicked, guileful, and deceitful man; who, though he was the son of a good king, was himself a detestable tyrant; like the former, he murdered his relations, and cast his wife from his bed, causing her to be slain, that he might with the more freedom enjoy his lustful passions. The fourth was Cune-glas, a contemner of religion, an oppressor of the clergy; one who offended God with his grievous sins, and warred against man with his sword; he was proud of his own wisdom, and placed all his trust in riches, and worldly pomp; he also forsook his wife, to follow his own inordinate desires. The last was Malgo Cunus, whom our author calls the dragon of the isles; and also that he was, in arms and dominion, stronger and greater than any other British potentate. Besides his commission of horrid and unnatural crimes, he is accused of slaying his uncle, who was then king, to pave his own way to the throne. After this, he put away his first wife, and took the consort of his brother's son (whilst he was yet living) to his bed; but when he had committed this open adultery for a short space, he caused both this unfortunate woman, and her guiltless husband, to be put to death. Such are the characters of these five tyrants, who flourished in the days in which Gildas lived. Nor has that mournful author in the least favoured the Britons themselves, but represents them as a people besotted with vices, and obstinately blind to their own good. Although this author, in the overflowing of his zeal, may have somewhat exaggerated the accusations, yet his authority is by no means to be doubted. More names of British princes might easily be made out, and a long detail of their acts pursued, but as the truth of their history is entirely doubtful, there needs no excuse for dropping the whole, and pursuing what appears to be more certain and authentic.

The actions of  
the Scots and  
Picts unknown.

The Scots and Picts retired to their own nations, and from the decisive battle of Stamford, in the year of our Lord, 450, to the middle of the sixth century, we have no true accounts of their proceedings; not so much owing, perhaps, to their own inactivity, as to their want of authors to record them; yet it seems likely, that their wars (if they made any) were confined within their own territories: for had they struck any blow of consequence in the neighbouring dominions of the Saxons, the historians of the early ages would not have passed over them in silence.

*The HISTORY of the KINGDOM of KENT continued.*

*EDBALD, the sixth KING of KENT.*

AFTER the death of Ethelbert, so justly famous in the English annals, A. D. 616. as well for his valour, as his piety and virtue, his son Edbald succeeded in the kingdom of Kent. During his father's life-time, he had been

Edbald apostates  
from the true  
faith.

\* Epist. Gildæ.

A. D. 616. carefully instructed in the Christian faith, and seemed to profess the same with great steadiness; but no sooner was he set upon the throne, than, throwing off the mask of religious purity, he discovered a mind depraved and vicious. He married the widow of his deceased father, and proceeded to live in such a dissolute manner, that his subjects soon threw off all restraint, and returned apace to their former idolatry. But being afflicted with a grievous distemper in his mind, the stings, perhaps, of a wounded conscience, he was at last, through the persuasion of Laurence, archbishop of Canterbury, re-converted to the Christian faith; in which he continued steadfast to the end of his life.\*

A. D. 617. After his return to religion, his first wife either died, or he put her away; for he married a second, named Emme, the daughter of Theodebert, king of Lorraine, by whom he had several children. Edbald reigned in peace twenty-four years, and died in the year of our Lord, 640, and was buried in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, by the side of his father.†

Edbald marries a second wife.

The issue of Edbald.

By Emme, his second wife, he had two sons, and one daughter. Ermenred, his eldest son, died before him. Ermenred married Oslave, by whom he had two sons, Ethelred and Ethelbert, who were afterwards murdered at the command of Egbert, their cousin-german,† and four daughters, Dompnena, who married a Mercian prince, Ermingburga, Erinburga, and Ermengythā, who were nuns.§ Edbald's second son was named Ercombert, who succeeded him in the kingdom. His daughter's name was Enfwith; she died a virgin, at Fulkestone, a religious house in Kent, having afterwards been a nun.

#### ERCOMBERT, the seventh King of KENT.

A. D. 640. ERCOMBERT, the second son of Edbald, succeeded him in the government of Kent. This prince was a very religious man, and the first who destroyed the temples of the idols, throughout his kingdom; of his civil or military government, we find nothing recorded. He married Sexburga, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, by whom he had two sons, and two daughters. His sons were Egbert and Lothair, both of them reigned in Kent after him. His first daughter was Ermenwold, who married Wulfere, king of Mercia. His second daughter was Ercongota, a professed nun in the monastery of St. Bridget's, in France, where she died, and was buried in the church of St. Stephen.\*\* Ercombert reigned twenty-four years, and after his decease, his eldest son, Egbert, succeeded him.††

Ercombert; his wife, and issue.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 5. & alia.

† Bede, ut sup.

‡ Chron. Sax.

§ Vita S. Werburgæ, MS. in the Cott.

Lib. marked Caligula, A. 8.

|| Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 9.

\*\* Bede, in loc. cit. & Malmf. lib. i. & Chron. Johan. Brompton.

†† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 664.

EGBERT, *the eighth King of Kent.*

EGBERT had no sooner ascended the throne of his father, than he cast A. D. 664. a jealous eye upon Ethelred and Ethelbert, the two sons of his uncle Ermenred, and to whom, indeed, the crown, of right, belonged; they had been excluded in the reign of Ercombert, because of their tender age, and Egbert, suspecting that now they were growing to man's estate, they would be troublesome to him, and interfere in the government, resolved to secure the diadem to himself alone, by their death. This cruel scheme was not long formed before it was put in execution, for he hired a treacherous villain, named Thurno, who, in expectation of a great reward, perpetrated the murder; and that the infamous act might be kept secret, their bodies were thrown into a river; but being in a few days cast ashore upon the bank-side, they were found by the inhabitants, to whom they were known, and were buried by them with great respect, and over their tomb they erected a small chapel.\* Their bones were afterwards removed, and re-buried in the abbey of Ramsey, in Hampshire, and by the country people they were honoured as martyrs.†

Egbert murders his two cousins.

Had not the jealous disposition of Egbert hurried him on to the commission of this murder, he would have left behind him the character of a just and equal prince; for every other part of his conduct was prudent and honourable. The peace, which had so long endured, was not broke through in his short reign, which was only eight years. He died in the month of July, in the year of our Lord 673.‡

Egbert a just prince.

Egbert had issue, two sons, Edric and Wigtred, who, after the death of his brother Lothair, succeeded to the kingdom of Kent. His issue.

LOTHAIR, *the ninth King of Kent.*

LOTHAIR, upon the death of his brother, obtained the government of A. D. 673. Kent, and excluded his two nephews from any share of the royal dignity; but Edric, the eldest of the two, being a man of an ambitious disposition, soon asserted his natural right, by raising seditions, and pestering the state with continual mutinies, and civil discords: so that his uncle enjoyed but little pleasure and satisfaction in the honour which he had seized upon.§ However, after repeated struggles, he at last so far prevailed, that Edric left the kingdom quiet for a time, and took refuge amongst the inhabitants of Suffex.

Edric makes war upon his uncle.

No sooner was the kingdom freed from one disturbance, than another A. D. 676. presently ensued; for Ethelred, king of Mercia, hurried on by his un-

Ethelred, king of Mercia, makes war upon Kent.

\* Will. Malmf. lib. i.

† Chron. Johan. Brompton.

‡ Bede, Ecc. Hist. l. iv. c. 5, & Chr. Sax.

§ Will. Malmf. lib. i.

A. D. 676. bounded ambition, entered the western borders of Kent, at the head of a large army, and, like a dreadful inundation, irresistible in its course, he wasted and destroyed the country wherever he came, plundering the inhabitants, burning their houses, ruining the churches, spoiling them of all their ornaments, and totally overthrowing all the monasteries and religious houses which stood within the limits of his march.

A. D. 677. Enriched with spoils, and glorying in the destruction which they had made, this sacrilegious band pursued their path to Rochester; that city soon felt the fury of their ungoverned rage, for sparing nothing, however sacred, with fire and sword they drove the unhappy citizens from their houses, robbed them of all their wealth, and then destroyed the whole place; leaving the smoking ruins, a horrid trophy of their barbarous conquest, they returned back to Mercia of their own accord. So strong was their power, and so weak the resistance they had met with, that they had unmolestedly directed their course wherever their own desires had led them; for, during the whole of this dangerous invasion, Lothair, the sovereign of Kent, had kept himself at a distance, not daring to take the field against these destructive foes.\*

A. D. 684. After the departure of the Mercian king, Kent once again enjoyed a short tranquility, yet it was but short; for now the destined time approached apace, in which her former glory should decline, and that independent power which hitherto she had asserted, be suppressed. Edric, the nephew of Lothair, who had taken refuge amongst the South Saxons, persuaded them to espouse his cause, and assist him in mounting the throne of Kent; and he so far prevailed upon them, that they raised a powerful army, at the head of which he entered Kent. When Lothair received information of his nephew's approach, and of the warlike preparations which were made against him, he quickly gathered his forces together, and set forward to meet him. Several sharp engagements ensued between the two armies, in the last of which he was shot through the body with a dart, and died shortly after under the surgeon's hands,† the 6th of February, in the year of our Lord, 685, after he had reigned near twelve years.

Rochester destroyed.

The death of Lothair.

#### EDRIC, the tenth KING of KENT.

A. D. 685. THE bar to his ambition thus removed, by the assistance of his friends, Edric ascended the throne of Kent; but yet he could not so easily gain the love and affection of his subjects: for regarding him as an usurper, they despised his rule, and were continually harassing him with civil discords; so that when he had with the greatest difficulty weathered out a

The rebellion of the Kentish men.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 12. & Chron. Saxon.

† Malmf. lib. i. Mat. West. sub anno 686. & Chron. Johan. Brompton.

boisterous

boisterous reign of two years,\* the people rose in all quarters, and in A. D. 685. endeavouring to stop these dangerous commotions, he was slain.†

### INTERREGNUM.

AFTER the death of Edric, the kingdom of Kent was rent and torn A. D. 687. by parties, and civil dissensions, so that it became a prey to designing tyrants and usurpers; yet none of them assumed the title of king, but domineered sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; being raised up, or put down, according to the capricious humour of the people. This universal disquietude prevailing amongst the Kentish men, moved the aspiring Ceadwalla, king of the West Saxons, to make war upon them, as imagining a fair opportunity was now offered of adding those dominions to his own. Wherefore, assisted by his brother Mollo, he entered the borders of Kent with a great army, and laid the country waste wherever he came. This alarming danger called for a general opposition; so that forgetting their civil discords, the Kentish Saxons ran to arms, and uniting their forces together, made head against their common foe. After several encounters, fortune prevailed against Ceadwalla, so that he was driven back, and the Kentish forces pursued him to the confines of their state. In this pursuit, they overtook his brother Mollo, who, with twelve of his companions, had taken refuge in a small fort, to avoid their fury; and because he would not surrender himself up, they set fire to the fort, and he, with all his companions, perished in the flames.‡ Ceadwalla no sooner heard of the unfortunate end of his brother, but vowing revenge, and breathing cruel defiance, he reinforced his army, and entered Kent the second time, where, with fire and sword, he destroyed great part of the country. At last, pricked with remorse of conscience for the dreadful slaughter he had occasioned, he returned back to Wessex, and shortly after went to Rome, where he died. Kent, thus delivered from the danger of the foreign foe, was not, however, freed from her own internal enemies; for no sooner was the apprehension of ruin, from the arms of the West Saxons, subsided, but the inhabitants returned again to their former discords, dividing their united force, and pursuing quarrels, without ceasing, amongst themselves.

About this time there were two petty tyrants, Wycherd and Webhard, A. D. 692. who taking the advantage of the capricious humours of the people, assumed the rule in Kent, where they for a time supported their dignity: but soon after, either dying, or being disliked by their subjects, they were put from their authority, to make room for Wihtred, brother to Edric,

Two tyrants in Kent.

\* Bede, Brompton, and others, say, he reigned a year and a half only. Bede, lib. iv. cap. 26. Chron. Johan. Brompt. &c.

† Malmf. lib. i.

‡ Will. Malmf. lib. i. Mat. West. sub anno 687.

A. D. 692. the lawful heir to the crown.\* As these two men were not of royal blood, and only held their rule by usurpation, they are not reckoned in the list of the kings.

WIHTRED, *the eleventh KING of KENT.*

A. D. 694. WHEN Wihtred ascended the throne, fresh dangers alarmed the state; for Ina, king of the West Saxons, (who succeeded Ceadwalla) thinking the revenge which his predecessor had taken upon the Kentish men, for the death of Mollo, was not equal to the offence, prepared a great army, intending himself to enter Kent, and subjugate it to his rule. Wihtred terrified at these proceedings of Ina, and finding himself in no condition of resistance, sent ambassadors to him, to know what his demands were, and to make fair proffers of peace. Ina insisted upon the delivery of those men who had been principally concerned in the destruction of Mollo, and also that Wihtred should pay him a large sum of money. The king of Kent was forced to comply with these grating demands, and therefore, thirty of the faction who had slain Mollo, were sent to Ina; † and also the whole of that sum which he had demanded. ‡

Wihtred purchases peace of Ina.

The death and issue of Wihtred.

The conditions of Ina being fairly complied with, he withdrew his army from the borders of Kent, and left Wihtred to enjoy his crown in peace and tranquillity. So just and equal was the government of this worthy king, that at his death he left the record of a virtuous name behind him. He died, lamented by his subjects, in the year of our Lord, 725, after a reign of thirty-one years, § and left behind him three sons, Edbert, Ethelbert, and Alric, all of whom successively succeeded him in the kingdom.

EDBERT, *the twelfth KING of KENT.*

A. D. 725. EDBERT, the eldest son of Wihtred, succeeded him in the government of Kent. We have no record left of the civil and military acts of

Edbert, a virtuous king.

\* Thus Henry of Huntingdon, Johan. Brompton, and others, expressly affirm, "Eotempore erant duo Reges in Cent. "non tam stirpem regiam quam secum - dum invasionem. Scilicet, Nithred & "Webhard." These are the very words of Huntingdon, with which Brompton also exactly agrees; and both of them afterwards speak of Wihtred as the right heir of the crown, succeeding these tyrants, only Brompton calls the first Wyherd. Bede seems to join Webhard with Wihtred, if he does not mean Wyherd; for he tells us, that A. D. 692, "Regnantibus in Cantia, "Vikredo & Suebhardo." Matthew of Westminster calls the latter Siward, and says, he was brother to Wihtred, and ruled with him. The Saxon Chronicle, Will. Malmesbury, and the Polychronicon, take no notice of either Wyherd, or his colleague, Webhard, but mention Wihtred, as reigning alone. Hen. Hunt. lib. iv. Chron. Johan. de Brompton, Bede, Eceles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9. Flores Historiarum, sub anno 692. Chron. Saxon. sub anno 694. Will. Malmf. lib. i. Polychr. lib. v.

† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 694.

‡ This sum, says Malmesbury, was thirty thousand marks of gold: "Triginta "millibus auri marcis." Malmf. de gest. reg. Anglorum, lib. i. cap. 2.

§ Chron. Sax. Malmf. and others, make his reign to have been thirty-three years. John Brompton says thirty-two.

this

this prince; but it appears, that he was greatly beloved by his subjects, A. D. 725. because, like his father, he had moderated his actions by the strictest justice. He does not seem to have had any issue. After a quiet reign of twenty-three years, he surrendered up his soul to God, and the kingdom to his brother Ethelbert.\*

ETHELBERT, *the thirteenth KING of KENT.*

THIS prince, following the example of his father and his brother, governed his subjects with great lenity. When he had reigned peaceably eleven years, he died without issue, and was buried in the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, at Canterbury, leaving the government of Kent to his brother Alric.†

ALRIC, *the fourteenth, and last lawful, KING of KENT.*

ALRIC, upon the death of Ethelbert, his brother, mounted the throne of Kent. This prince is also commended for his justice and virtue. The peace which flourished in his brother's reign, continued great part of his own; until Offa, king of the rising Mercian state, ambitious of power and conquest, made war upon him.

Alric, who had for some time foreseen the designs of Offa, made all the preparation that he could to oppose him, and a little time soon confirmed the justness of his suspicion; for Offa entered Kent, at the head of a powerful army, and began to lay the country waste. When Alric heard of his approach, he marched with his forces against him, and both the armies met at Otford, where a long and bloody battle ensued; in which, at last, the Mercians prevailed, and the Kentish men were beaten from the field. Whether Alric, who survived this battle, afterwards obtained the government of Kent to himself, or reigned tributary to Offa, cannot so easily be determined at this distance of time; the latter seems, indeed, most likely, because of the peace which followed in his dominions: for, if Alric had asserted his right, it is highly probable, that such a step would have drawn upon him the anger of Offa, and provoked him again to make war in Kent, which does not seem by any means to have been the case.

In this king's reign, by some unhappy accident, a fire broke out in the city of Canterbury, which raged with such violence, that the whole

\* Malmf. lib. i. cap. 1. &c.

† Ibid. &c.

‡ Matthew Paris, indeed, affirms, that Offa slew this king with his own hand; but that could not be, for Malmfbury expressly declares, that he reigned thirty-four years,

and the Saxon Chronicle places this battle in the year 774, so that he survived nineteen years. M. Par. vit. Offæ. Malmf. lib. i. Mat. West. Hen. Hunt. Chron. Sax. &c.

Canterbury burnt.



A. D. 776. city was burnt to the ground; but in what manner this horrid conflagration began is not recorded.\*

A. D. 793. After a reign of thirty-four years, Alric deceased, leaving behind him no heir to inherit the kingdom; so that with him sunk the royal line of kings. From this time, the glory of the realm began by degrees to die away; and every day advanced the hasty ruin of the state. No lawful successor being left to take the government upon him, divers who, either by flattery or riches, had obtained the public favour, were seditiously striving for the crown. Amidst these various distractions of the state, one Ethelbert Pren, a man of no exalted birth, set up his claim: and having gained a powerful faction on his side, prevailed against the rest of his competitors, and assumed the royal dignity.†

The state of the kingdom after the death of Alric.

ETHELBERT PREN, *the first USURPER after the Death of ALRIC.*

A. D. 794. HAVING mounted the throne, Ethelbert endeavoured to make his footing sure, and strove to gain the love of his subjects; but unfortunately for him, he could not succeed in his attempt: for, as he had by force usurped the dignity, he was disagreeable to all but those of his own party. Having held his reign some short time, amidst the murmurs and dislikes of the people, he was at last pulled down from his honour, in a manner that he seems but little to have expected.‡

Pren not agreeable to his subjects.

A. D. 796. Kenulph, king of Mercia, observing the discontent which prevailed in Kent, determined to try the fortune of war, and set upon that state, in order to join it with his own. To accomplish his desire, he entered the borders of Kent, and began in a hostile manner to destroy the country. Pren alarmed at this threatening danger, marched with all the forces he could collect, to meet the Mercians. The end of this war proved fatal to Pren, for his forces were routed, and he himself being made prisoner, was carried into Mercia; where, after he had been detained some little time, he was at last released by Kenulph, at the altar of a church which he had lately caused to be built. Rejoiced at having thus obtained his liberty, Pren returned into Kent, expecting to re-assume his crown; but in this he was most dreadfully mistaken; for his subjects openly refused his rule, and would by no means admit of his re-establishment in the state: so that he was again returned to that obscurity from whence he had so lately emerged, after a short reign of three years.§

Kenulph enters Kent.

CUTHRED, *the second USURPER.*

A. D. 797. PREN thus expelled from the kingdom, another usurper, named Cuthred, set up a claim to the government; and what by the help of a strong

Cuthred usurps the kingdom of Kent.

\* Marinus ex collect. in MS. in Cotton. Lib. marked Julius C. vi.

† Malmf. lib. i. cap. 1.

‡ Ibid. & alia; & Chron. Sax. sub anno 796.

§ Malmf. ut sup.

party, and the power of Kenulph, he succeeded so well in his attempt, A. D. 797. that he soon obtained the crown: but yet he gained not the good-will of his subjects, who, far from submitting quietly to his rule, were continually troubling him with rebellious and private dissensions. In this uneasy manner he passed through a short reign of eight turbulent years, when he died, and left the kingdom to another aspiring chief, named Baldred.\*

**BALDRED, the third, and last USURPER.**

THIS pretender to the Kentish crown, however unfortunate in the end, A. D. 805. was in the beginning far more prosperous than either of his predecessors, and held the government of the state a considerable time; so that it is likely, by some prevailing means or other, he softened the tempers of <sup>Baldred favoured by his subjects.</sup> his subjects, and taught them to prefer peace and order, to the noise and riot of rebellion.

In the eighteenth, and last, year of Baldred's reign, Egbert, the king of A. D. 823. Wessex, made war upon his dominions, and defeated all his forces in a fierce battle; he himself being put to flight, escaped the fury of the enemies, and passing the Thames, forsook his kingdom, and returned no more to molest the conqueror, or make good his own claim.† Where he died, or what became of him afterwards, is not known; perhaps, preferring the satisfactory enjoyments of a private life, to the noisy tumult of his kingly state, he might take up some lowly disguise, and rest in that, contented. Happy the man that can be so contented; for thus, beneath the envy of the great, the storms of fortune blow over his homely cell, and wake him not: for, armed with innocence, and blessed with peace, his mind is easy, and his rest secure!

Kent thus forsaken by her king, and over-run with the forces of her A. D. 824. conqueror, soon submitted to his desires; and from this time, ceasing to be a distinct state, was joined to the kingdom of Wessex.‡ Thus have we seen the rise, the glory, and the fall of this first Saxon dominion! begun in the year of our Lord 457, by Hengist, the great general of the Saxons; and upheld for the space of three hundred and thirty-seven years, by his valiant descendants; and after that again, thirty-one years, by the three succeeding usurpers.

Idleness and ease, to a people inured to war, and fond of military honours, are pernicious and destructive; and these evils pursued, have frequently been the overthrow of nations. To human knowledge, and to human grandeur, the destined bounds are fixed by Providence; to such a point they are permitted to advance, and when they have reached the summit of

\* Malm. ut sup. & Chron. Sax. sub anno 805.

† Ibid. Ibid. 823. & Chron. Wintoniensis.

‡ Ibid. Ibid.

their glory, they must again decline. It seems, perhaps, at first, as extraordinary as it is true, that those very arts which are the adornments of a nation, should prove, in the end, its ruin; for with refinement of taste, and correctness of manners, luxury and effeminacy by degrees creep in unseen, and lay a powerful hold upon the minds of men: so that in our very aiming at perfection, we deceive our own wishes; and in our most exalted designs, betray the weakness of human nature. Such, we have seen, is the transitory state of nations, of which man himself is a perfect picture; as they advance in wealth and honour, so he increases in strength and knowledge; and as they decline again, so sinks he to the dust, and leaves his room to others new sprung up.

END OF THE KINGDOM OF KENT.

SUSSEX;

## S U S S E X;

## THE SECOND KINGDOM OF THE

## H E P T A R C H Y.

**T**HE rapid success of Hengist and his party in Britain, being understood in Germany, tempted several other chiefs to follow his example, and seek for better fortune in that very land, where he, their friend and relation, had obtained such valuable possessions. Big with the expectation of future advancement, Ælle, a brave and warlike Saxon, left his native home, accompanied with his three sons and a powerful army of bold adventurous youth, and landing upon the borders of Suffex, began the second kingdom of the heptarchy.

The kingdom of the South Saxons, contained the counties of Suffex and Surry; it was bounded on the east by Kent, on the west by the territories of the West Saxons, on the south by the main ocean, and on the north by the river Thames.

*ÆLLE, the first KING of the SOUTH SAXONS.*

ÆLLE, with his three sons, Cymen, Wlenching, and Cissa, together A. D. 477. with their army, came from Germany in three large ships, and landed in Britain at a place called Cymenes shore, in the year of our Lord 477; and twenty-eight years from the first arrival of the Saxons under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa. Their landing was vigorously resisted by the Britons, who, in a powerful party, stood upon the shore to oppose them: but such was the valour and success of the Saxons, that, after a bloody conflict, they gained a complete victory, and chased the Britons from the sea-side,\* pursuing them to a large extensive wood, called Andredfleage,† situate upon the borders of Kent, where they took refuge, and hid themselves in their secret retreats. Thus Ælle gained his first footing in the land; but the Britons suffered him not to enjoy in quietness the possessions which he had conquered: for, issuing from the wood, they assailed his army, and harassed him continually with sudden attacks, and private ambushes. In this posture his affairs continued for the space of eight years, during all which time, he seems not to have gained any

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 477.

† Also sometimes called Andredswæld. It took its name, says Camden, from Cacer

Andred, or Andredescester; of which city we shall speak in a succeeding note.

A. D. 477. very considerable advantage over the Britons ; but was wholly employed in defending himself from their assaults. In these wars, it is thought that his two eldest sons, Cymen and Wlenching, lost their lives ; because we find no mention made of them afterwards.

A. D. 485. Aurelius Ambrosius, the valiant leader of the Britons, having joined those parties which were assembled together against the South Saxons, determined to try the success of one pitched battle :\* nor was Ælle, and his sons, less desirous of pursuing their fortune in the field. Both armies met at a place, called Mercersbourn, and fought on either side with such courage, that, after a prodigious slaughter, it was hard to determine to which party the victory properly belonged.† However, the Britons, weakened by this obstinate conflict, withdrew from the field ; and the Saxons also made their retreat ; nor one, nor other, chusing to second the blow which was already struck. Immediately after this battle, Ælle dispatched messengers into Germany, declaring his success, and intreating his friends to send him a fresh reinforcement of troops, to pursue his conquests, and settle the kingdom which he had begun, upon a strong and permanent basis, by expelling the Britons from their strongholds. However it was, this flattering invitation had not the sudden effect which one might have expected amongst a set of restless people, who were ever waiting for favourable opportunities to plunder and molest others ; for it appears to have been upwards of four years before he had sufficiently recruited his army, to take the field again against the Britons.

A. D. 490. Having now reinforced his army, and thinking himself sufficiently strong to encounter with his opponents, he marched against them ; and, because he had been greatly incommoded by their frequent excursions from the woods and secret recesses, he was determined to destroy those dangerous retreats ; and, in order the more effectually to accomplish this important design, he first marched against their chief city, called Andredes cester,‡ which was the asylum from whence they issued forth to the woods, and to which they instantly retreated on the approach of danger. The proceedings of Ælle, justly alarmed the Britons, who, anxious for the safety of this consequential place, had recourse to every artifice and contrivance which they thought could secure its defence : within its walls they planted a strong garrison, to resist the assaults of the Saxons, the remaining parties retired to the woods, and hid themselves in

\* Chron. Rossensis, MS. in the Cotton Lib. marked Nero D. ii. & Mat. West. sub anno 485.

† Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii. Chron. Rossen. ut sup. & Chron. Sax. sub anno 485.

‡ Andredes cester, or *Caer Andred*, Cam-

den apprehends to have stood upon the same spot where the town of Newendon is now built, by the side of the river Lymen, which separates Kent from Suffex. Camd in Kent, & vide Lambardes Peramb. o Kent, fol. 207.

private ambushes, to annoy the march of Ælle, as he approached, and A. D. 490. to disturb him in the rear, whilst he was making an attempt upon the city. These prudent measures they pursued for some time, with great success, continually harassing the army of the Saxons, and delaying the prosecution of the siege. Ælle, vexed to the soul at these tedious interruptions, bethought him of a new method to carry on his design: he divided his whole army into two parts, one of which he commanded vigorously to assault the city, whilst the other division was employed in resisting the Britons who were scouting in the field, and prevent their disturbing those who were making their attempts upon the besieged. By this means, he soon took the city by storm, and raised it to the ground. Provoked at the resistance which had been made against him, in his anger he miserably murdered all the inhabitants, sparing neither women nor children.\* When he had effected this important conquest, he soon gained all the other passes, and drove the Britons from his dominions; taking full possession of Suffex and Surrey.

When Ælle had thus extended and secured his kingdom, he ruled in peace the remainder of his days, and departed this life about the year of our Lord 514,† thirty-six years after his first arrival in Britain; leaving the government of Suffex to his son Cissa for Cymen and Wlenching, the two elder sons, are supposed to have been slain in the wars between the Britons and their father, during the first eight years from his arrival.

#### CISSA, the second KING of the SOUTH SAXONS.

Cissa accompanied his father in all his warlike undertakings, and was A. D. 514. also with him at the siege of Andredes cester; but after he ascended the throne, either from his love of peace, or because the Britons, in his father's time, were thoroughly subdued and driven from his territories, he did not undertake any further war during his whole reign. It is true, that he assisted Cerdic, the West Saxon prince, with money, to carry on his conquests against the Britons, yet he never appears to have attended in person to his aid; but seems rather to have employed his time in securing his own dominions, and restoring quietness at home. He built Cichester, then called Cissa cester, or the city of Cissa, after his own name; and Chisburg, or Cissbury,‡ these were two large and considerable cities.

The quiet reign of Cissa, is said to have endured the space of seventy-six years, when he died, in the year of our Lord, 590; leaving the kingdom to Edelwalch.

\* Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii. Chron. Sax. sub anno 490. Chron. Rossen. Matt. West. sub anno 492. & Ethelwerd, lib. i. &c.

† The Chron. Wintoniensis places his death, A. D. 508.

‡ Hard by Offington there is a fort, encompassed with a bank rudely cast up,

where, the inhabitants are persuaded, that Julius Cæsar entrenched, and fortified his camp; but *Cissbury*, the name of the place, plainly witnesseth it to have been the work of Cissa, the son of Ælle, king of the South Saxons. Camd. Britannia, in Suffex.

ATHELWALD, or EDELWALCH, *the last KING of the SOUTH SAXONS.*

A. D. 590. Edelwalch becometh a Christian. THIS prince, like the former, did not acquire any great degree of fame in military affairs, especially in the beginning of his reign. He is, indeed, more justly noted, as being the first person who received the Christian faith, amongst the South Saxons: he was baptized in Mercia, at the intreaty and advice of Vulfhere, the king of that realm. In this king's reign, there happened a dreadful famine in Suffex, which raged so violently, that the unhappy people were driven to the utmost distress, and, in the height of despair, threw themselves from the mountains, and were dashed in pieces, or drowned in the sea; esteeming it far more preferable, in this desperate manner to put a sudden end to their wretched beings, than wait the lingering stroke from the hand of death, which hovered over them:\* so true it is, that the shocking apprehensions of distant destruction, are often far more dreadful than even instant death; nor has the comfortable doctrine of Christianity itself been able entirely to remove these ideas from the minds of men; it is a lamentable truth, that even in the present and enlightened age, almost every day produces some striking instance of self-destruction. What must the horrid reflection of such a moment be, when flying from the misery of this short and transitory world, men launch precipitately into the unknown regions of eternity?

A. D. 680. The death of Edelwalch. Edelwalch, after having passed all his youthful days in peace, was even in his old age called forth to the field: for, a valiant young man, named Cadwalla, of noble parentage, amongst the West Saxons, being banished from his country by the prevalence of some faction, brought with him a strong band of soldiers, and fell upon the kingdom of Suffex with undaunted fury. This alarming news being made known to the king, he collected his forces together, and placing himself at their head, conducted them against Cadwalla, and gave him battle. The end was unfortunate to the South Saxons, who were put to flight by Cadwalla and his party; and in this battle their aged monarch was slain.†

BERTHUNUS and ANTHUN, *two RULERS of the SOUTH SAXONS.*

A. D. 681. Berthunus and Anthun prevail against Cadwalla. No sooner was the death of Edelwalch made known amongst his subjects, than Berthunus and Anthun, two noblemen, of Suffex, took upon them the management of the war, and gathered a fresh army to oppose Cadwalla; who, proud of his late victory, was making hasty advances into the kingdom. Fortune favoured the attempts of the two valiant chiefs; for, in several encounters, they obtained the victory, and drove

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 13.    † Ibid. cap. 15.

Cadwalla and his party from the kingdom. After the flight of their A. D. 681. inveterate foe, the South Saxons enjoyed a little space of peace, under the rule and governance of the two chiefs who had delivered them from their oppressors.\*

During this tranquility in Suffex, Cadwalla had returned into the A. D. 685. kingdom of Wessæx, and, after the death of Centwine, obtained the crown. No sooner had he seated himself firmly in his royal dignity, than he remembered his former enterprizes amongst the South Saxons; and considering the weakness of their state, conceived that the conquest would not be difficult to achieve. These ambitious reflections led him into the field, and once more he turned his arms against Suffex. Berthunus, and his colleague, did all which lay in their power to support their bleeding country, and prevent her ruin; but all their noble struggles were in vain; and the death of Berthunus (who was soon after slain in battle) finally determined her wretched fate! What became of Anthun, after the defeat and death of Berthunus, his associate, is not recorded; but it is very certain, that after this he bore no further rule in the state. The victorious Cadwalla continued his march through the whole kingdom, and added to his former conquests the isle of Wight.† From this time Suffex ceased to be a distinct kingdom, and was by Cadwalla united to that of Wessæx, over which he bore his rule, in the year of our Lord 686; so that the duration of this monarchy exceeded not two hundred and nine years, from the first arrival of Ælle.

The end of the kingdom of the South Saxons.

The kingdom of the South Saxons, notwithstanding it was begun so early, and held with such glory under Ælle, its first king, was yet by far of the shortest continuance of any one of the heptarchy. Indeed, from the death of Ælle, its glory began to die away, and its ruin was completed by the inaction of the succeeding kings: for, weakened and effeminated by the long duration of peace, the whole state became an easy prey to their warlike neighbours. The little consequence this monarchy acquired, after the death of Ælle, is, without doubt, the chief reason why all the ancient accounts of it, (which are handed down to the present time) are so very imperfect.

The accounts of this kingdom imperfect, and why.

Before I conclude the history of this kingdom, I shall make one short remark on the long space which is taken up with only the two reigns of Cissa, and his successor, Edelwalch, making together one hundred and sixty-six years. With regard to Cissa, I have followed the Saxon chronicle; but, if we consider that he came to Britain with his father, A. D. 477, and we may reasonably suppose he was then old enough to bear arms, making him but sixteen, he will be in the year 590, when he is said to have deceased, one hundred and thirty-nine years of age. His successor, Edelwalch, also (to make the date in the least agree with the age, and time of Cadwalla's mounting the throne of the West Saxons)

Observations on the great age of Cissa and Edelwalch.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 15. † Ibid. cap. 16, & alia.



did reign the full space of ninety years, exclusive of his age before he came to the crown ; and we know, at this period, youths of an age incapable of governing, were seldom suffered to assume the diadem ; so that at the most moderate computation, his age must also have exceeded one hundred years. And it is far from impossible, but that these two monarchs might have lived to these extraordinary ages, especially when we consider, that the latter part of the Cissas, and all the reign of Edelwalch, was peaceable and quiet, which, together with strong constitutions, and minds at ease, might greatly conduce to the preservation of their health, and the lengthening of their lives.\*

\* Modern authors have conjectured, and not without great shew of reason, that some other prince might be advanced to the South Saxon throne, immediately after the death of Cissa, and before the succession of Edelwalch, whose name is lost in the confusion of those times, or neglected by the ancient authors, as doing nothing worthy of mention : and this is the more likely to be true, when we reflect on the

declining state of the kingdom, which had now lost its former consequence ; and even Edelwalch himself might, perhaps, have shared the same fate, had not his, and the state's, conversion to Christianity, an event of great importance, recalled them from the oblivion into which they had sunk. Vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. II. part i.

END OF THE KINGDOM OF SUSSEX.

## H I S T O R Y

O F

## W E S S E X,

## THE THIRD KINGDOM OF THE HEPTARCHY.

THE next monarchy which sprang up in Britain, was that of the West Saxons, first begun by Cerdic and his son Cenric: and was by far more glorious, and of longer continuance, than any of the rest; all of which were by degrees overcome, and the inhabitants, by force of arms, brought under the subjection of the kings of Wessex. This dominion contained the counties of Berkshire, Southampton, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Devonshire, and part of Cornwall. Its boundaries were Suffex on the east, the Thames on the north, the main ocean on the south, and also on the west beyond Cornwall.

The extent of  
the kingdom of  
Wessex.

## CERDIC and CENRIC, the first KINGS of WESSEX.

CERDIC, with his son Cenric, accompanied with a large army, on A. D. 495, board of five great ships, arrived at Britain in the year of our Lord 495, and landed at a place thence called Cerdiceshore.\* The Britons were quickly alarmed, and gathering their forces together, came down to the sea-shore without delay, to give them battle. The Saxons boldly withstood their approach, and resisted their furious attacks with great vigour: the fight continued the whole length of the day, sometimes the one, sometimes the other, appearing to prevail. Yet when the night and darkness prevented their further combat, the conflict still remained doubtful; however, the Saxons by degrees, got firm footing in the land. It is true, the Britons would not suffer them to enjoy the fruits of their labours in peace, but were continually disturbing them with sudden assaults and repeated skirmishes. In this troublesome sort, the Saxons held their possessions for the first twelve years; yet, fearless of danger, and hopeful of better fortune, they stood the storm with confirmed resolutions, and baffled all the attacks of their inveterate foes.†

Cerdic lands in  
Britain.

Port, another German chief, with his two sons, Biedda and Mægla, A. D. 501, following the fortune of their fellow-countrymen, arrived in two ships on that part of Hampshire, since called Portsmouth, and said to have

Port and his two  
sons land in  
Britain.

\* Cerdiceshore, or Cerdic's shore, † Ibid. Hen. Hunt. lib. ii.  
Chron. Sax.

taken

A. D. 501. taken its name from him. They brought with them a strong band of hardy youths, and at their first landing gave battle to the inhabitants. Their undertakings proved victorious; they chased the Britons from those parts, taking possession of all their wealth, and settling in their habitations; remaining there till greater occasion of signalizing their valour called them forth to the aid of the West Saxons, who were extending their rule under the leading of Cerdic, their warlike chief.\*

A. D. 508. Distressed on all sides, the hapless Britons knew not which way to turn themselves, nor whither to direct their power, to make the most important resistance; fresh numbers daily poured upon them, fresh invasions called aloud for their salutary help. But now, above all, the rising glory of the West Saxons seemed to threaten the greatest danger to the land, wherefore all uniting in a powerful band, they marched against Cerdic, under the conduct of Aurelius Ambrosius, who, in honour of his indefatigable labours for the defence of his country, was surnamed Natanleod.† Of this chieftain we have spoken before; he is reported to have been the descendant of that Constantine, who, in the reign of Honorius, was elected emperor in Britain by the mutiny of the army.‡ Alarmed at these great preparations which were making against him, Cerdic dispatched messengers into Kent and Suffex, to beg assistance from Oëta and Cissa, who ruled in those realms. He also sent pressing invitations to Port and his two sons, who, pleased with the opportunity

Natanleod, the  
British chief,  
slain by Cerdic.

\* Henry Hunt. Chron. Sax. sub anno 501. Ethelwerd, lib. i. & Henry Hunt. lib. ii.

† This name signifies the defender or protector of his country. To avoid all interruptions in the body of the work, I have thrown into this note such observations as I thought were necessary to be made, on my having expressly declared, that Aurelius Ambrosius and this Natanleod, are but one and the same person; and I may the more particularly be thought bound to say something in my defence, as I have not the authority of ancient history to vouch for me. It is strange, as Camden has observed, that so singular a personage, and also so famous, (as from the declaration of Huntingdon, as well as from the import of his name, we may easily find he was) should so suddenly spring up amongst the Britons, and be only known to have fought this single battle: and it will also appear still more extraordinary, if we recollect, that Aurelius Ambrosius, (as we may judge from the words of Gildas, and other authentic authors) was at this

time living; and to whom could this honorary surname so well belong, as to him, who had often fought the battles of the Britons, and led them to frequent conquest. This opinion, I acknowledge, is neither new, nor my own, but has been long since started by the searchers into the ancient records. I may observe, that another competitor is set up against Ambrosius, which is Uther Pendragon, said to be his brother; but as his existence is very doubtful, and it appears not, save in the fables of Geoffry Monmouth, that he ever acquired that honour which was so justly due to the former; for this cause, I hope I may be excused in setting him aside, and placing in his stead, a man, to whom this title with greater reason may be said to belong; and a man, who, from all the best authorities, we may be assured was in being, and that at this very time. Vide Camb. Offer Primord. Milton's Hist. Eng. Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. II. &c. &c.

‡ Radulph Dicetis de reg. Brit. & vide page 54, of this Chron.

which

which offered to settle them in the land, obeyed the summons, and A. D. 508<sup>a</sup> joined the West Saxon army; Cerdic receiving also reinforcements from Kent and Suffex, found himself in good condition to abide the fortune of war, and resist all the attempts which the Britons might make upon his possessions. In the mean time, Natanleod advanced at the head of his troops, and prepared to give battle to the Saxons, who, when they heard of his approach, advanced to meet him; and at a place, which was after called Cerdic's ford, a grievous conflict ensued. This day proved fatal to the Britons, who there lost their king and defender, and with him five thousand of their bravest troops;\* whilst the Saxons, elated with their success, retired from the field, and for a considerable time remained unmolested by the Britons.

Six years after this famous battle, there arrived in Britain a fresh supply of troops from Germany, under the conduct of Stuf and Witgar; who were both of them nephews to Cerdic. They came in three large ships, and landed at Cerdic's shore, where their uncle had first disembarked. The neighbouring Britons assembled together, and endeavoured by battle to stop their advancement into the land; but these young men being trained up to war, and regardless of the danger, strove to signalize their names by the greatness of their courage, and abode the conflict with undaunted resolution. In the end they triumphed over their opponents, and forced their passage through the midst of them, making a prodigious slaughter, as well of their leaders, as of the private men.† When they arrived in Wessex, they were joyfully received by their uncle, and the fame of their victory at Cerdic's shore was spread through the land, to the no small terror of the distressed Britons.

Now surely had Britain been lost at once, had not Arthur, a noble prince, who succeeded Natanleod in the command, by the bravery of his conduct, put fresh spirits into the aching hearts of the natives, and once more revived in their souls the glimmering light of hope. This prince is particularly unfortunate, in having all his actions wrapped up in such a cloud of fable and romance, that it would be more than an Herculean labour to unravel the knotted clue, and separate the truth from fiction. That there was such a man, and that he was a great and valiant chief, is hardly to be doubted, since such authentic vouchers are to be produced, to prove his existence; but that he should have performed all those wonderful acts which are ascribed to him, cannot be true: for, the great success and advancement of the Saxons in Britain, and that during the time in which he is said to have lived, plainly contradict those groundless assertions.‡ Just as much are we in the dark concerning his birth, his parentage, or the exact time of his death; how-

<sup>a</sup> The arrival of Stuf and Witgar.

<sup>b</sup> The history of Arthur full of uncertainties.

\* Ethelwerd, lib. i. & Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii.  
 † Chron. Sax. sub anno 514. Ethel-

werd, Hist. lib. i. & Huntingdon, lib. ii.  
 ‡ Geoffrey Monmouth Hist. Brit. lib. vii.

A. D. 514. ever, the most likely report is, that he was son to Pendragon, the brother of Aurelius Ambrosius.\*

A. D. 519. Cerdic, and Cenric, his son, strengthened by the reinforcement which they had received from Germany, and presuming on the consequence of their last important victory, were still striving to extend their possessions, and secure their footing in the land, by weakening the Britons, and driving them from their borders; nor had this wretched people for a long time dared to attack them, or resist the grievous oppression, until uniting together, they were led on by Arthur, and began to ravage the borders of the West Saxon kingdom. This being made known to Cerdic, he and his son, with a potent army, marched out to defend their territories, and give battle to the Britons. Both powers met again at Cerdic's ford, and another sharp conflict ensued;† but to which party the victory fell, is not recorded; yet, as far as we may judge from succeeding circumstances, there is little doubt to be made, but that the Saxons had the upper hand: for, presently after the engagement, Cerdic, who until this time had only acted as the chief general, grasped at new honours, assuming the title of king, and began his rule as such over the kingdom of Wessex, making Cenric, his son, his partner in the royal dignity; and it is not likely that he would have proceeded in this manner, unless Fortune had still continued to smile upon his attempts.‡

A. D. 527. From the time that Cerdic and Cenric took upon them the monarchical government, to the year of our Lord 527, the space of eight years, they seem to have enjoyed their dominions in peace; or, at least, during the whole of that period, they were not molested with any consequential war. How they employed this leisure, it is impossible to discover; but yet they could not so thoroughly strengthen their frontiers, but the enemy would at times be breaking in upon them. About this time, the Britons having recovered their losses, and reinforced their army, were determined once more to try the fortune of war, and strive by battle to save their sinking country from total ruin. Under the conduct of Arthur, they resorted to the field, and began afresh to set upon the borders of Wessex. Roused at the alarm, the valiant kings trained out their forces, and hastened to put a stop to the advancing danger. When they had reached a place, after called Cerdic's leah, they met the British army, with whom they engaged;§ but what was the success of this encounter is not known, unless it could be absolutely determined that this was the battle, which, several of the ancient historians have informed us, was fought at Mount Budon, near Bath, where the Saxons

\* Ranulph Dicetis Hist. Brit.

† Ibid. Ibid. &c.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 519. Henry Huntingdon, & Ethelwerd, ut supra.

§ Chron. Sax. sub anno 527.

were hemmed in by the Britons, and received a grievous overthrow.\* A. D. 527. This action is said to be the last, in which the British chieftain carried the conquest over his enemies; after which time, perhaps, he either died, or was slain in the defence of his country.†

Cerdic, after this encounter with the Britons, retired back with his army, and fought no further to molest them; so that a cessation of arms ensued, which was continued for several years. But though he ceased his attempts upon such of the inhabitants as lay round about him upon the main land, yet still he passed not the rest of his reign in continual idleness; for, three years after the last battle, accompanied with his son Cenric, and his nephews, Stuf and Witgar, he invaded the isle of Wight, and overcame the inhabitants in a set engagement, at a place which was after named Witgara burg, (because Witgar there built a city) and brought the whole island under his subjection.‡

Cerdic invades  
the isle of  
Wight.

When Cerdic had thus begun and settled the kingdom of Wessex, he found full employment to defend its frontiers from the incursions of the Britons. Various were the skirmishes and battles which ensued, and as various the success; sometimes the Britons, sometimes the Saxons, bearing away the palm of victory: yet none of these actions were considerable enough to shake the state, or affect the general welfare of Wessex;

Various skirmishes between  
the Britons and  
Saxons.

\* Gildas Hist. cap. 26. Bede, Ecc. Hist. lib. i. cap. 16. W. Malmf. lib. i. Nennii, Hist. &c. &c.

† And it is not without great reason, that modern authors have supposed that this battle of Cerdic's leah, was the same with that of Badon Hill; for the peace which followed it, seems plainly to prove, that Cerdic was not willing any more to risk his fortune in the field, but rather chose to sit down quietly in his present possessions. The time also, and every other circumstance relative to these important actions, agree exactly; so that we may with as much certainty as can be gained from reasonable conjecture, rest assured they are both the same engagement, under different names. Milton, in his History of England, has taken great pains to prove this fact, and has succeeded, in my opinion, as well as the nature of the subject would admit of; to which book the reader is referred, where he may find that author's opinion at large. Before I conclude this note, I shall just add, that Nennius, and after him, Henry of Huntingdon, have ascribed to Arthur twelve several victories over the Saxons. The first

battle was fought by the mouth of the river Glem, or Gleyne; the second, third, fourth, and fifth, were fought near another river, called Duglas, which is in the county of Lineux: the sixth upon the banks of the river Bassus. The Scala Chronica says, Arthur fought with Calgryne by the water of Duglas, now called Done. Scal. Chr. lib. i. The seventh in the wood Calidon: the Sca. Chr. adds, Arthur chased Cheldrik into a great wood, by Baelings; the eighth was beside the castle of Guinien; in this battle, he carried the image of the cross of Christ, and the Virgin Mary, upon his shoulders; the ninth at Carleon; the tenth at Rither wood; the eleventh on a mountain, named Agned Cathregeon; and the twelfth at Badon Hill. But at what particular time these battles were fought, or against what parties of the Saxons, (if it is true that they were all fought) cannot at present be determined; therefore I have put them into a note, rather than burthen the body of the work itself with uncertainties. Vide all the authors quoted in the preceding note.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 530. & Will. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2.

- A. D. 532. for which reason they are not particularly noted by the ancient historians.\* In this warlike manner, Cerdic held his rule in Britain thirty-eight years; from his first arrival, when he died, in the year of our Lord 533, fourteen years after he had assumed the title of king.

*CENRIC alone, the second KING of WESSEX.*

- A. D. 533. IMMEDIATELY after the death of Cerdic, his son Cenric took the government of the whole kingdom upon him, and held it with a powerful hand. || The first nineteen years of his reign appear to have been passed in perfect peace; the Britons were either afraid of opposing him, or else hindered by their want of leisure, being employed, perhaps, in other wars; or, what is more likely, by their civil dissensions amongst themselves: for, notwithstanding the danger of their situation, no sooner could they gain the least prospect of peace, but, turning their thoughts from the Saxons, their general enemies, they fell to discords and jarring in their own districts.† Cenric, soon after his advancement to the throne, gave the government of the isle of Wight, to his cousins, Stuf and Witgar, the latter of which assumed the title of king, and built a city, which he named Witgara's burg, (or Witgar's city) where he was buried.

- A. D. 552. The Britons now fearing the growing greatness of Cenric, were justly apprehensive of the daily encroachments which that prince was constantly making upon their territories, laid aside for a time their private discords, and united themselves against the West Saxons. To oppose this torrent, Cenric collected his army, and resolutely took the field. Both armies met near Salisbury, where a desperate engagement ensued; the Britons fighting vigorously for the recovery of their country, and the Saxons as valiantly resisting, to preserve their former conquests; at last, (after great slaughter on both sides) the Saxons prevailed, and chased the Britons from the borders of their kingdom.‡

- A. D. 556. After the last victory obtained by Cenric and his party, the Britons ceased for some time to molest them, and employed the whole of that leisure time in recruiting their forces, and strengthening the army; for their late loss had not so much depressed their spirits, but they resolved again to try the fortune of the field, and set their hopes of liberty once more at stake. The news of their approach was no sooner brought to the court of Cenric, than, calling his army together, and aided by his son

\* Hen. Hunt. lib. ii.

|| Chron. Sax. &c. &c. Speed, Sammes, and other modern historians, gave Cerdic another son, named Chelwolf, from whom, they say, sprang Efwine, King of the West Saxons, who ascended the throne, A. D. 674; but the Saxon Chronicle declares,

that he was descended from Ceolfulf, the second son of Cenric. Vide Chron. Sax. sub anno 674.

† Gild. Hist. cap. ult.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 552. Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii. & Ethelwerd, lib. i.

Ceawlin, he marched forth to defend his dominions. At Beranburg he came up with the forces of the Britons, and gave them instant battle; the conflict, which was sharp and bloody, continued all the day; nor did they on either side give back, till the approach of night obliged them to retire; the slaughter, which was very great, seems to have been nearly equal on either side; for neither the one nor the other could challenge the victory. The loss which both armies sustained in this engagement, moderated the rage of their irritated minds; for, when the morrow's sun was risen upon the plain, they had no inclination to renew the battle; but after performing the last honours to their departed friends, they left the field: the Britons returning to their own confines, and the Saxons retreating to their separate homes.\*

This was the last battle of any consequence that happened in the reign of Cenric, who was now advancing in years, and spent the remainder of his life in peace. This warlike chief came over with his father, and was assisting in the establishment of the West Saxon kingdom, which he supported with great glory during the whole of his life; being nothing inferior to his father, either in courage, or conduct. When he had reigned rather better than twenty-six years, (after the death of his father) he departed this life, and left the kingdom to the government of Ceawlin, his eldest son.†

Cenric had three sons; the first was Ceawlin, who succeeded him; the second, Ceolfulf; and the last, Cuth. Ceolfulf assisted his brother Ceawlin in his wars, and was often partaker with him in his victories. He died in the year 571, leaving behind him one son, named Ceol, or Cearlic, who is said to have chased his uncle Ceawlin from the kingdom, and seated himself upon his throne. Cuth, the third son of Cenric, was famous rather for his issue than for any particular acts of his own; he had three sons, the first was Chelwulf, who was king of the West Saxons; the second was Chel, who was father to Cingils, another king of the West Saxons, and grandfather to Kenwal and Cenwine, also kings of Wessex. Ched, the last son, was father to Kenbert.

#### CEAWLIN, *the third King of the West Saxons.*

AFTER the death of Cenric, his son Ceawlin, mounted the throne of Wessex. This prince had given great proofs of his valour at the battle of Beranburg, where he was present, and assisted his father. The early part of his reign seems to have been spent without the least disturbance; for the Britons, the chief enemies of the state, had drank of late so deep of the bitter cup of misfortune, and were driven to such distress, that they were glad to enjoy in quietness the favourable ray of peace which shone

\* Chron. Saxon. sub anno 556. Henry Huntingdon, Ethelwerd, &c.

† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 559, &c.



A. D. 566. upon them. Now secure in his possessions, this welcome tranquillity gave Ceawlin leisure to look round upon the neighbouring kingdoms: this careful survey raised in his mind an ambitious thirst for war, and led him to attempt the enlargement of his state. Such is the effect of ambition upon the minds of men, that the greatest injustice will wear the mask of glory, and the unlawful spoils forced from a distressed nation, be called the honourable gifts of fortune, due to valiant deeds. Till this time the wars of the Saxons had been only carried on against the Britons, a firm cordiality existing amongst their own different states; but Ceawlin first made a breach upon that love and friendship which had hitherto prevailed: for, considering the youth of Ethelbert, king of Kent, and the inactivity of his subjects, who had for a long time lived in profound peace, he thought the conquest of that kingdom would not be difficult to effect; therefore, he resolved to begin the war, and accordingly made every preparation necessary to accomplish his design.\*

A. D. 568. Ceawlin's intentions were not so secretly conducted, but that Ethelbert was made acquainted with them. These alarming proceedings caused him to make the most speedy provision for the defence of his kingdom. His army conducted by two valiant chiefs, called Oslac and Cnebba, met the forces of Ceawlin, at Wibbandune, where a severe battle ensued, in which Ceawlin proved successful; for the two leaders of Ethelbert's army were slain in the field, and all his forces routed; himself hardly escaping by a precipitate flight.† Notwithstanding this favourable beginning of Ceawlin, he seems to have met with some further opposition, which cooled the ardour of his ambition, and prevented his making any greater advances into the kingdom of Kent; for we hear not of any other considerable action which he performed. But soon after this battle he seems to have returned to Wessex, and dropped the further pursuit of his design.

A. D. 571. About this time, the Britons began once more to make head against Ceawlin, and were entering the borders of Wessex. This alarming circumstance called his forces to the field, who, under the conduct of Ceolfulf, his brother, marched against the advancing foe. We are not acquainted with the reasons that withheld the king himself from being present at this war, which was entirely left to the management of Ceolfulf; who was so fortunate in his undertaking, that, in a decisive battle, fought near Bedford, he routed the British army, and crowned his conquest with the capture of four of their chief towns, namely, Lygean burg, Egelburg, Bensington, and Evesham.‡ This distressing accident so deeply

\* Hen. Hunt. lib. ii.

† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 571. Hen.

‡ Chron. Saxon. sub anno 568. Will. Hunt. lib. ii. &c.  
Malmf. Hen. Hunt. &c. &c.

affected the spirit of the Britons, that, in woeful silence, they made their A. D. 571. retreat from the face of their enemies, lamenting the misfortunes which every day increased upon them; not that all these appearances of speedy ruin could prevail upon them to leave their own inordinate pursuits, or follow such methods as prudence and discretion would dictate; for, instead of continuing strong in their confederacies, and uniting firmly together, they still kept up their own civil disputes, and laid themselves open to the attacks of their opponents, who were not backward in seizing upon the least occasion of pursuing their advantage. Soon after this last important victory, Ceolfulf returned home to the court of his brother Ceawlin, and died the same year.

Ceawlin now enjoyed about six years in tranquility, at the end of which A. D. 577. the war was again renewed with the Britons, who had brought into the field a greater army, headed by three of their kings, named Cornail, Con-The battle of Deorham. didan, and Fariamail; they met the forces of Ceawline (who was accompanied by Cuth, his eldest son) at a place called Deorham, where a severe battle was fought, which ended in favour of the Saxons; for all the three British kings were slain in the field, and their army put to flight. Ceawlin and his son pursuing their victories, took from the Britons three other large towns, as Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bathancester. After this action, Ceawlin returned home, and peace was again established for the space of six years.\*

Ceawlin, during this tranquility, made great preparations for the de- A. D. 583. fence of his territories; and was now determined to set upon the neighbouring Britons, who, taught by woeful experience the consequence of their fatal discords, had entered into a stronger combination than before, and were resolutely making head in the defence of their native rights. Ceawlin himself (assisted by his son Cuth) conducted the army against them, who had by this time completed their recruits, and were not backward in opposing the marches of their detested foes. Both armies met at a place called Fethan leag,† where the battle was presently begun: at the first onset, Cuth, the son of Ceawlin, was overpowered by numbers, and slain in the field, and all the party which he commanded was put to flight; Ceawlin seeing this alarming accident, made a fierce charge upon the wing of the Britons with which he was engaged, and putting them to the rout, came up with those who had oppressed the Saxons, and were taking the advantage of their victory; this unexpected aid revived the spirits of the flying troops, so that rallying their forces, and returning again, the onset was renewed; while the Britons hemmed in on all sides, were unable to resist the sudden and repeated

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 577. Hunt. ut sup. &c.

† Supposed to have been somewhere

near Fekenham forest, in Worcestershire. Vide Samme's Brit. vol. I. p. 563.

A. D. 583. shocks; their main body began to give way, and in the end a total overthrow ensued, the Saxons remaining absolute masters of the field. This important victory opened the way for Cæwlin, who, pursuing his fortunes, seized upon several towns, where obtaining great spoils, he and his army returned home laden with riches, and glorying in their extended conquests.\*

A. D. 591. This considerable loss to the Britons, though for a time it prevented their undertaking any war against the West Saxons, was far from extinguishing that implacable hatred which they bore towards them: and now grown desperate in their resolutions, they only kept up the appearance of peace, until they had sufficiently strengthened their army, to take the field again; which was no sooner done, than they set upon the borders of Wessex. Nor was Cæwlin behind hand in making head against them; he came up with their army at a place called Woden's Mount, † where a severe engagement ensued. But here the glory which had before accompanied Cæwlin in his undertakings, left him suddenly; for his forces were totally overthrown, and the Britons bore away the victory, making a great slaughter of the flying Saxons. Cæwlin, oppressed with grief, returned to his court; but there also the change of fortune awaited him: for now his subjects, who had hitherto received him with applause, and extolled his victories to the skies, began by open murmurs, and continued discontents, to fall from their allegiance, and rise in rebellious parties. Struck with their ingratitude, and seeking to avoid their mischievous designs, this unfortunate monarch left the kingly dignity, and abandoned the realm, dying in poor estate, about the year of our Lord 593. ‡ Whilst conquest crowns the hero's bold attempts, his name may be idolized by the people, and his actions mentioned with repeated praise; but turn the scale, and view him in disgrace, one fatal battle lost may quite eclipse his former glory, though the due reward of many years hard toil, and many victories gained! This was the unequal fortune of Cæwlin, who, after gaining so many important conquests, was thrust from the throne for one unlucky overthrow, after he had reigned gloriously thirty-one years.

The unfortunate overthrow of Cæwlin at Woden's Mount.

The issue of Cæwlin.

Cæwlin had two sons; the eldest, Cuth, who served under his command, and was slain at the battle of Fethan leag; this Cuth was the ancestor of Ceadwalla, king of Wessex. The youngest son was named

\* Thus the Saxon Chronicle, Ethelwerd, and Henry Huntingdon, have it. Mat. West. indeed mentions the death of Cuth, and the Saxons' flight, but takes no notice of the recovery of the day by Cæwlin. But besides the foregoing authority for the truth of this last circumstance, the eight years peace which followed, seems plainly to confirm it. Chron. Saxon. sub

anno 583. Chron. Ethelwerd, & Hist. Hen. Hunt. lib. ii. & Mat. West. sub anno 584.

† Woddbnes beoplige, in the Saxon Chron. or Woden's Mount, in Wiltshire. Vide Sammes, &c. Speed translates it Woden's Ditch. See his Chron.

‡ W. Malmf. lib. ii. & Chron. Saxon. Vide Holinghed, Stow, Speed, &c.

Cuthwin : he survived his father, but succeeded not in the kingdom, A. D. 591. (being, perhaps, too young to take the government upon him.) Cuthwin was the ancestor of Ina and Egbert, two famous kings of the West Saxons; the latter being him, who overcame all the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and joined them with his own.

CEOLRIC, *the fourth KING of Wessex.*

CEOLRIC, the son of Ceolfulf, the brother of Ceawlin, succeeded him A. D. 592. in the kingdom of the West Saxons, and by some supposed to have had great hand in the expelling of his uncle Ceawlin from the realm, in order to make way for his own advancement to the throne: however this may be, his reign exceeded not five years; and during all that time, he does not appear to have been concerned in any business of consequence, nor to have undertaken any war of importance enough to claim the notice of the ancient historians; nor does he seem to have left any issue behind him to inherit the kingdom.

Ceolric's actions not known.

CEOLWULF, *the fifth KING of Wessex.*

CEOLWULF, the next successor in the realm, was the son of Cuth, the A. D. 597. brother of Ceawlin. The rising state of Wessex had now attracted the envy of the surrounding powers, so that the whole reign of this prince was spent in continual warfare. As soon as he had assumed the royal dignity, the East Angles, under the conduct of Redwald their king, set upon his territories; these with great resolution he opposed, and his first encounters were crowned with success, for Redwald and his party left the borders of Wessex presently after, and returned home. No sooner had this enemy quitted the kingdom, than another sprang up to disturb its peace. The Britons, who for a time had kept themselves quiet, broke forth again, and renewed the war; these also subdued, the Picts and Scots made their way from the north, and aiding the Britons, begun afresh to ravage the borders of Wessex. Thus was Ceolwulf continually harassed; new dangers breaking out, as fast as the old ones were subdued. In the end, with constant resolution and undaunted courage, he quelled these troubles: but yet it was not ordained, that he should hold his reign in peace; for when he had thus long acted only on the defensive, his ambition led him on to retaliate, in some measure, upon his neighbours, the wrongs which he himself had received; therefore in an evil hour, he meditated an expedition against the South Saxons, in the prosecution of which he lost his life; after he had reigned fourteen years.\* He does not appear to have left any children behind him to inherit his dignity.

Ceolwulf's continual warfare.

\* Chron. Sax. sub ann. 597 & 607. Huntington. lib. 2. Mat. West, &c. &c. W. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2. Chron. Winton.

CYNEGILS, *the sixth KING of WESSEX.*

A. D. 611. CYNEGILS, the son of Ceol, brother to Ceolwulf, succeeded him in the kingdom of the West Saxons. This prince associated with him his son Cwichelm, who jointly managed the affairs of the state, in all matters of consequence, either relative to peace or war.† The early part of their reigns, they seem to have employed in confirming the love and unity which prevailed amongst their subjects, in strengthening their army, and putting themselves in the best posture of defence.

Cynegils makes his son his partner in the throne.

A. D. 613. When these princes had finally settled the affairs of the kingdom, they turned their thoughts against the enemies of the state; and principally the Britons, who had been so troublesome to their predecessor, attracted their regard; and because they were not yet reduced to perfect tranquillity, they determined to march out against them with a large army. These proceedings being made known to the Britons, they got their forces together with all the expedition they could, resolving boldly to oppose the encroachments of their advancing foe. At Beandune ‡ the armies met, and a bloody battle ensued, which ended in the total overthrow of the Britons, who were put to flight with such prodigious slaughter, that upwards of two thousand of them were left dead in the field.§ By this victory the West Saxons secured the peace of their country, and reduced the Britons to so low an ebb, that for a long time after they dared not enter the field again.

The Britons overthrown at Beandune.

A. D. 628. The kingdom of Wessex now enjoyed a perfect peace for the space of fifteen years, at which time the blood-thirsty and restless Penda, king of Mercia, envying its happiness, invaded its borders, and roused the inhabitants from their pleasing tranquillity. To oppose his march, Cynegils and his son, at the head of their army, advanced as far as Cirencester, where they met the foe and gave them battle; the fight was obstinately continued all the day, with prodigious slaughter on either side; the night at last put an end to the conflict, but yet it was impossible to determine which party had the upper-hand: however, in the morning, on both sides they found their loss so great, that neither the one nor the other were willing to renew the engagement; but after some consultation between Penda and his party, and Cynegils, his son, and their army, proposals were agreed to, and a fair peace was concluded upon and confirmed. This done, Penda returned to Mercia, and Cynegils, with his son Cwichelm, to their own court.\*

Penda invades Wessex.

A. D. 635. After this battle, the reign of Cynegils was passed in peace; this circumstance gave him leisure to attend to the salutary doctrine of Christianity.

Cynegils receives the Christian faith.

† Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2.

‡ Beandune in the Sax. Chron. now Bindon, in Dorsetshire. Camden Brit.

§ The Saxon Chron. says two thousand

and forty-six, but Henry Hunt. makes them to be two thousand and sixty-two.

\* Chron. Sax. sub an. 628. W. Malmf. Hen. Hunt, &c. sup.

tianity, which now began to be preached in his dominions by Berinus : A. D. 635. and what by the impression that his discourses made upon the heart of Cynegils, and the persuasion of Oswald the Pious, king of Northumberland, (who afterwards married his daughter) he was convinced of the divine truths, and was baptized at York. The example of the king was presently followed by his subjects, who joyfully received the Christian faith, and forsook their former errors.†

The next year after Cynegils had been baptized, Cwichelm, his son, A. D. 636. was also lead to the font, at the city of York, and died in that very year, leaving his father in sole possession of the kingdom. In the mean time the Christian religion flourished exceedingly in every part of Wessex.‡

Cynegils outlived his son and colleague only six years, and died in the year of our Lord 642, greatly lamented by his subjects, after he had gloriously reigned thirty-one years, and was buried in the monastery of Winton, which he had newly founded.\* Cynegils had three sons and one daughter, the eldest was Cwichelm, who had reigned with and died before his father; the second was Cenwalh, who succeeded his father; and the third was Centwine, who was also king of the West Saxons. The daughter of Cynegils was named Kineburga; she was, in her father's life-time, married to Oswald, king of Northumberland.

Besides the actions which are already attributed to the prowess of Cynegils, and his warlike son, Cwichelm, they made war upon the three sons of Sebba, (who, after the death of their father, ruled in the kingdom of the East Saxons) and slew them in the field, and brought the power of that dominion to a very low ebb. ||

### CENWALH, the seventh KING of WESSEX.

AFTER the decease of Cynegils, his second son, Cenwalh, ascended A. D. 643. the throne of Wessex. In the early part of his reign, this prince gave himself up to vice, and still continued in the idolatry of his ancestors, utterly refusing to receive the Christian faith, after the example of his father, and the greater part of his subjects. Amongst other unlawful actions, he put away his wife Sexburga, who was the sister of Penda, king of Mercia.§ This last imprudent step had nearly ended in his total destruction; for the disgrace which was thrown upon Sexburga, drew down upon him the anger of Penda her brother, whose fierce and ferocious temper needed but little offence to stimulate his revenge.

Cenwalh soon found, by woeful experience, that the storm which he had raised was too great for him to withstand, for Penda, invading the

† Bede Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 7.  
Hist. Ethelwerd. Chron. Sax. sub ann. 635.  
Malmf. Hunt. &c. ut supra.

‡ Ib. ib. &c.

\* Chron. Wint. J. Redbourne, &c.

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|| Matt. of West. places this transaction in the year 616, about which time perhaps it may have happened.

§ Bede Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 7.  
P. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2.

borders

A. D. 645.  
Penda drives  
Cenwalh from  
his kingdom.

Cenwalh puts  
away his wife.

Eastsex subdued  
by Cynegils and  
his son.

Cwichelm is  
baptized and  
died.

The death and  
life of Cynegils.

A. D. 645. borders of Wessæx, at the head of a powerful army, paved his way with ruin and destruction. Alarmed at the approaching danger, Cenwalh abandoned his kingdom, and fled for refuge to the court of Anna, king of the East Angles, where he was received in a friendly and hospitable manner. By the advice and persuasion of that virtuous prince, he was converted to the Christian faith, and the year following his flight from Wessæx, received baptism at the hands of Birinus.\* After he had taken upon him the true religion, he entirely changed his former course of life, and again received Sexburga, as the consort of his bed.

A. D. 648. When Cenwalh had resided three years at the court of Anna, he was, by the assistance of that prince, restored to the throne of Wessæx,† and his haughty brother, Penda, appeased by his submission, and the restoration of Sexburga to her former honours, turned his arms another way, and ceased to molest his kingdom. Cenwalh thus unexpectedly re-established in his kingly dignity, held the government with an equal hand; his actions he moderated by justice and mercy, seeking by virtue and discretion to gain the love of his subjects, and to promote their peace.

Cenwalh re-  
established in  
the kingdom.

A. D. 652. Notwithstanding the great lenity with which this excellent prince did bear his rule, there yet were murmurs and discontents prevailing amongst many of his subjects; agitated, perhaps, by evil-designing men, from private discords they proceeded to open rebellion, and took the field against him. To suppress this dangerous revolt, he gathered all the forces together that he could, and assisted by his fast friends, gave battle to the rebels, at a place called Bradenford, by Afene;‡ but which party prevailed, as well as the general cause of the rebellion, is not known: however, by Cenwalh's enjoying his dignity with great honour for a considerable time after this event, it is highly probable, that he gained the victory, and entirely subdued the rebellious faction.§

The West Sax-  
ons revolt.

A. D. 658. Peace thus restored in Wessæx, for the space of six years Cenwalh received no further disturbance; but at the expiration of that term, the neighbouring Britons, who had long lain quiet in their own states, began again to lift up their heads, and meditate a renewal of the war. These commotions being made known to Cenwalh, he instantly caused preparations to be made, in order to resist their attempts, and with his army met them at a place called Peonnum,|| where a sharp engagement ensued,

The Britons  
overcome at  
Peonnum.

\* Bede & Malm. ut loc. cit. Chron. Sax. sub anno 646, & Hist. Ethelwerd.

† Ibid. Ibid. &c. &c.

‡ This place, Camden tells us, is Bradford, in Wiltshire, near the river Avon. Vide Camd. in Wiltshire.

§ Ethelwerd, Hist. lib. ii.

|| Penor, or Pennum, in Somersetshire. Vide Camden. Here I may take notice,

that Will. Malmesbury mentions two battles fought by Cenwalh, against the Britons; the first at Witgornes burg, of which he relates nothing of the particulars, nor which army was victorious; the second at Peonnum, as above; but the Sax. Chron. Ethelwerd, Henry Huntingdon, Matt. West. Higden, &c. &c. make mention of but one battle.

in which the Britons were totally routed, and pursued by the West Saxons as far as Pendridan; a small remnant escaping with great difficulty. The prodigious slaughter which was made of the Britons during the course of this battle, and the pursuit which followed, was so great, that they were glad to make peace, and retire from the borders of Wessex.

After three years rest, fresh disturbances called Cenwalh to the field again; for Wulfere, king of the Mercians, son of Penda, moved by his irresistible ambition, and thirst for glory, and nothing regarding the tie of relationship which was existing between himself and Cenwalh, invaded his dominions, and destroyed the country wherever he came. *Wulfere invades Wessex.* The West Saxons, under the conduct of their king, had recourse to arms, and at a place called Possentes burg, fought with the Mercians, but without success; for Fortune favouring the attempts of Wulfere, his army prevailed, and Cenwalh with his party were put to flight.\* The Mercians having thus gained a passage in the kingdom, pursued their victories to Pendridan, and invaded the isle of Wight, which they took; and Wulfere afterwards gave it to Edewelch, the king of the South Saxons.

When Wulfere, king of Mercia, departed from Wessex, Cenwalh enjoyed his kingdom in peace till the day of his death, which happened in the year 672. He reigned thirty years, including the three years that he was absent from the kingdom. His body was buried in the cathedral church at Winchester.† He had but one wife, Sexburga, the sister of Penda, who outlived him; and by whom he does not seem to have had any issue to succeed him in the kingdom. *The death of Cenwalh.*

### SEXBURGA, GOVERNESS of the WEST SAXONS.

AFTER the decease of her husband, Sexburga, his queen, (a woman of great abilities) took the government of Wessex upon her. She was well acquainted with the affairs of state, and supported her charge with uncommon spirit. When she had ruled the space of one year,‡ she was either deposed by her subjects, or prevented by death, from making a greater figure in the realm: the former, indeed, is most likely; for we may reasonably suppose, that the minds of this fierce people, and the warlike ideas which they imbibed from their ancestors, could not in these early times be so refined, as to permit them to sit down contented under the government of a woman, even though she might have been a perfect

*Sexburga assumes the government.*

\* Ethelwerd relates the success of this battle in a manner totally different from all other authors; for he declares, that the victory was gained by Cenwalh, and that he took Wulfere prisoner: but this is not likely to have been the case, from the circumstances which follow. The account of this battle, as it stands in the text

above, is confirmed by the Saxon Chron. Malmf. Hunt. Mar. West. and all the authors quoted before.

† Chron. Winton. per T. Redbourne.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 673. Chron. J. Brompton & Vet. MS. in Bib. Cotton. marked Julius D. vi. Huntingdon, &c.



- A. D. 673. politician; they rather chose the bold and hardy warrior for their chief, who would lead them on to acquire their honour in blood and slaughter, than the polished statesman, by whose direction they might enjoy full peace and affluence, whilst their swords were rusting in their scabbards.\*

ESCWINE, *the eighth KING of WESSEX.*†

- A. D. 674. WHEN this extraordinary woman had ceased to rule in Wessex, Escwine, the descendant of Ceolulf, the son of Cenric, was advanced to the throne. Centwine, the brother of Cenwalh, was indeed the next lawful heir, but it seems that Escwine made him partaker of his dignity.‡

Escwine joins  
Centwine with  
him in the  
kingdom.

- A. D. 675. In the second year of his reign, Escwine fought a bloody battle against Wulfere, the king of Mercia, who had entered the borders of Wessex, and was spoliing the country. The place where the armies met, was called Bidanheafod, and, after a prodigious slaughter on either side, the victory remained doubtful.

Escwine fights  
with Wulfere.

- After Escwine had reigned two years, he deceased, leaving neither wife nor children behind him to succeed him in his dignity; therefore, Centwine, his colleague, after his death, took upon him the government of the whole kingdom.

Escwine leaves  
no issue.

CENTWINE, *the ninth KING of WESSEX.*

- A. D. 676. By the death of his colleague, Centwine remained unrivalled in the kingdom of Wessex. Few of the actions of this prince are recorded; but yet his wars with the Britons prove him to have been a brave and valiant commander; against whom he so prevailed, that he drove them from their possessions in the west, and chased them even to the sea-shore.§ Overcome with this perpetual stream of misfortunes, the spirit of resistance amongst these wretched people (who inhabited the western angle of Britain) was quite broke down; so that despairing of success, they forsook their arms, and in extreme indigence fled to mountains and secret places, mournfully reflecting on the miseries of their present state. What immediately followed amongst them is not known; but, perhaps at last inured to their woes, and familiar with distress, their misfortunes might by degrees be less felt; and because they found they could not better their situation, they might use the utmost of their endeavours to render it as comfortable as possible.

Centwine over-  
comes the Bri-  
tons.

Centwine dies  
without issue.

- Centwine reigned nine years, in great repute, after the death of his colleague, and died in the year of our Lord 685. He left no issue behind

\* Will. Malm. lib. i. cap. 2.

† This king and his associate, who outlived him, are by Bede, for what reason I know not, called "*Subreguli*," or petty kings. Ecc. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 12.

‡ Thus much we may gather from the

words of Bede, and the more express declaration of Malmesbury; though Huntingdon, Mat. West. and others, have let them down as reigning separately.

§ Chron. Sax. sub anno 681.

him to inherit the kingdom, so that it fell to Ceadwalla, an aspiring A. D. 676. young man, of noble birth.\* He sprang from Cutha, the eldest son of Ceawlin.

CEADWALLA, *the tenth King of Wessex.*

CEADWALLA seems in the early part of his life to have discovered the A. D. 680. seeds of an ambitious temper. By the prevalence of some particular faction, he was, during the reign of Centwine, banished from his country; yet such was his interest in the realm, that a strong party of valiant men attended upon his steps, and made themselves partakers of his fortune. After he left Wessex with his little army, he invaded the neighbouring kingdom of Suffex, where he slew Edelwalch, who ruled in those dominions, and routed all his forces; pursuing his conquest, he ravaged the country wherever he came, and his followers loaded themselves with the spoils. When he had for some time continued his marches in Suffex, two valiant chiefs, named Berthunus and Anthun, arose in the defence of their suffering country, and with a strong army which they had collected together, gave him battle. Fortune so far favoured their courageous attempts, that they drove the invading Ceadwalla and his party from the borders of Suffex, and took the government of the kingdom upon themselves.†

Some account  
of Ceadwalla  
before he suc-  
ceeded to the  
crown.

After Ceadwalla had left Suffex, he returned into his own country; A. D. 685. about which time the death of Centwine opened the way before him to the throne of Wessex: nor was he backward in seizing upon the favourable opportunity, but quickly set up his claim to the crown, and succeeded in his designs. When he had settled himself securely in the government, he turned his ambitious eyes again upon Suffex. In his former wars he had discovered the weakness of that kingdom; and though he had been expelled by force from thence, yet he readily conceived, that with a stronger army he might in a second expedition easily subdue the whole realm, and add it to his own dominions. Elated with these aspiring thoughts, he collected a large army together, and marching to the borders of Suffex, began his invasion, destroying with fire and sword as he passed through the land. These alarming dangers called for the speedy assistance of the two valiant dukes, who had before restored peace to their bleeding country: at the head of all their forces they marched forward, to oppose the passage of Ceadwalla. But the engagement proved unfortunate to the South Saxons; for Berthunus was slain in the field, and Anthun with the army put to flight. This misfortune reduced the power of Suffex to so low an ebb, that the miserable inhabitants were no longer in condition to resist their conquering foes: so that the whole country was seized upon by Ceadwalla, and became subject to his dominion.‡

The South  
Saxons over-  
come.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 15.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

A. D. 686. Suffex thus overcome, Ceadwalla marched to its southern borders, near the sea, and determined upon the conquest of the isle of Wight; wherefore, with his army he invaded that little kingdom, and obtained a signal victory over the unfortunate inhabitants, who submitted themselves to their conqueror. The two sons of Arvald, the king of that island, had (on the first notice of Ceadwalla's design) withdrawn themselves from thence, and lay hid not far off: but soon after, being betrayed, they were taken from their retreat, and delivered up to Ceadwalla, at whose command they were first baptized, and after put to death.\*

The isle of  
Wight con-  
quered.

A. D. 687. The success which had crowned the attempts of Ceadwalla upon Suffex and the isle of Wight, was far from satisfying his aspiring wishes; on the contrary, it proved a spur to his ambition, and hurried him on to greater undertakings. By the conquest of the South Saxon kingdom, he opened a free passage into Kent. Considering the peace and tranquility which had so long prevailed in that district, and that having at this time no lawful heir to inherit the crown, the kingdom was divided into various factions, and disturbed by civil dissensions, he looked upon the opportunity which now offered for his invading it, as too favourable to be neglectfully passed by; wherefore, assisted by his brother Mollo, he led his army, animated by their victories already gained, and big with the hopes of future spoils, into the borders of Kent. The alarm of this approaching ruin, contrary to the thoughts or desires of Ceadwalla, put an end for a time to the civil discord which had prevailed amongst the people, and they all unanimously united together in one body against their general foe; therefore, the first attempts of Ceadwalla were far from being so fortunate as he had expected: yet he continued his march, and did great damage. In one of these encounters, his brother Mollo was slain as he was making his retreat, with twelve brave warriors who accompanied him; for, being encompassed by the Kentish men, they had taken refuge in a small fort, which was at hand, where they defended themselves for some time, refusing to yield themselves to the besiegers. The Kentish men enraged at the opposition which they made, set fire to the fort, and Mollo, with his followers, perished in the flames. This unfortunate accident so highly exasperated Ceadwalla, that with his army he returned again to Kent, and began in most bloody sort to revenge his brother's miserable death. Wherever he came he laid the country waste; the cities and towns he burnt with fire, and slew the inhabitants with the sword: nor were the wretched inhabitants, with all their combined forces, able to beat him back, or stop the progress of his rage.†

Ceadwalla makes  
war in Kent,  
and his success.

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 16. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2. Chron. Sax. sub anno 686, &c.

† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 687. & alia. The author of the *Scala Chronica* says, that "Ceadwalla killed Edric and Elwalki, who began to rebel in Westsex; this so much displeased the Kentish men, that

they rose against him. To quell this disturbance, he sent his brother Mollo into Kent." Thus, he reports, the war began, (but on what authority I know not.) The rest of his account agrees with that in the text. *Scala Chron. lib. ii.*

In all these engagements Ceadwalla had spilt such a profusion of guilty blood, that when he came seriously, and in a religious light, to reflect upon the dreadful consequences of his cruel conquests, he was struck with remorse; and in order to expiate in some measure the offence, he quitted his kingly dignity, after a reign of little more than three years, and went in an humble manner to Rome, where he received baptism at the hand of Sergius, (who was then pope) and was called Peter. In the same year, being about thirty years of age, he died in that city, and was there buried in St. Peter's church, having a long Latin epitaph engraven upon his tomb.\* He does not appear to have been married, so that he left no issue behind him to succeed in the kingdom.

Ceadwalla goes to Rome.

### INA, the eleventh KING of WESSEX.

AFTER the departure of Ceadwalla from Wessex, Ina, a noble young man, descended from Cuthwine, the son of Ceawline, took upon him the government of the kingdom. His character, as drawn in the early histories, is truly amiable; he was a powerful and wise prince, bearing himself with constant valour in war, and ruling with equal prudence in time of peace. He also greatly forwarded the Christian religion, which at this time began to flourish in much purity. At last, attending, perhaps, rather more than was necessary to the doctrine of the priests, he gave way to an enthusiastic zeal, which led him to forsake his worldly honour, and undertake a foolish, though fashionable, pilgrimage to Rome.

The character of Ina.

In what particular actions the first five years of his reign were employed we know not; for the peace which endured till then, and some time after, gave him no occasion of signalizing his valour. Ashamed of this inactive life, he pretended (about this time) to call to mind the destruction of Mollo, the brother of Ceadwalla; and declaring to his people, that he thought the revenge, which his predecessor had taken, was not equal to the cruelty of the fact, he therefore held himself justified to invade the kingdom of Kent again, and quite complete the ruin of that state: thus were his ambitious designs masked under the splendid appearance of justice! The alarming news of Ina's preparations to invade Kent was soon made known to Wihtried, who then reigned in that district; and his apprehensions of the consequences were still more dreadful, because he found himself in no condition to oppose his adversary by force of arms. In this extremity, ambassadors were dispatched to Ina, who made large demands to pacify his wrath: wherefore, a prodigious

Ina prepares to invade Kent.

\* The original of this epitaph, as given in Bede, is as follows: "Elic depositus est Cedwal, qui & Petrus, Rex Saxonum, sub die duodecimo kalendarum. Maja-rum, indictione secunda; qui vixit annos plus minus triginta, imperante Do-

mino Justiniano piissimo Augusto; anno ejus consolatus quarto pontificante apostolico viro domino Sergio Papa, anno secundo" And this is preceded by a long Latin poem. Vide Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 7.

A. D. 694. gious sum of money was delivered to him, and thirty of the chief actors in the murder of Mollo and his companions.\*

A. D. 710. Six years after the confirmation of this peace, the Britons once more began to make head against Wesssex; and under the command of a chief, named Gerent, a large army of them entered the borders of the realm. Ina, watchful for the safety of his subjects, gathered all his forces together, and being joined by his cousin Nun, hastened to stop their progress. A desperate engagement ensued, which in the beginning seemed to promise conquest to the Britons, for a valiant leader, on the Saxon's side, (named Hige bald) being slain, the army was for some time in confusion; but being rallied again, by the prudence and conduct of Ina and Nun, the onset was again begun, and the Britons found such sharp resistance, that they shrunk back, and were closely pressed by the Saxons; at length, being unable to withstand their force any longer, they fled from the field, and left Ina in full possession of his glorious conquest.† But yet he oppressed them not as his predecessors had done, for about this time the noblemen of the Britons began to intermarry with the noble virgins of the Saxons, and the Saxons again with those of the Britons.‡

A. D. 715. His next important wars were those which he supported against Celred, king of Mercia, with whom he fought a sharp and bloody battle at Wodens burh, where, after prodigious slaughter on both sides, the victory yet remained doubtful. The true occasion of these wars is not set down by the historians; but it is most likely, that ambition on one side or the other, might be the first and original cause.§

A. D. 722. Seven years after the battle of Wodens burh, the South Saxons, who had long groaned under the bondage of those of Wesssex, began to revolt, and with repeated struggles fought to regain their native liberty. Under the conduct of a chief whom they set up, named Ealdbright, they took the field. This rebellion brought Ina with his army into Suffex, where he fought with the South Saxons; but the immediate success of this battle is not recorded.||

A. D. 725. After three years, the war being continued, (and, as we may suppose, with different success) Ina again fought a great battle with the South Saxons, which proved a decisive one; for Ina and his army prevailed against their opponents, and slew their leader, Ealdbright, in the field. The loss which the South Saxons sustained in this encounter was so considerable, that they were no longer able to make head against the

\* W. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2. Chr. Sax. sub anno 694.

† Chron. Saxon. sub anno 710. Hen. Hunt. lib. iv. Ethelwerd, &c. &c.

‡ Chron. Winton. T. Redbourne.

§ Chron. Sax. Hunt. lib. iv. Ethelwerd. Brompton, &c.

|| Chron. Sax. sub anno 722.

West Saxons, but submitted themselves to the will of the conqueror, A. D. 725, who once more united the whole of their dominions to his own.\*

When Ina had reigned in glory the space of thirty-nine years,† by the continual persuasion of Ethelburh, his queen, he relinquished his crown and state, and journeyed to Rome, where he passed the rest of his life in obscurity, divested of all worldly pomp,‡ and died in poverty. This king has left behind him an excellent code of laws, which were made in his time, and are preserved to this day. Ina had one brother, named Ingild, who died before him; and two sisters, Cwenburh and Cuthburh; the last was married to Ealdferth, the king of Northumberland, but soon after she was parted from him, preferring a monastic life to the married state.§ Ina left no children behind him to inherit the crown of Wessex.

### ETHELHEARD, *the twelfth* KING of WESSEX.

AFTER Ina had abdicated the throne of the West Saxons, Ethelheard, A. D. 728, a near relation of his, was advanced to the dignity; not indeed by the common consent of the whole kingdom, but rather by the prevalence of some strong parties. For Oswald, a noble young man, descended from Cuthwin, the son of Ceawlin, appears to have had a better claim to the crown than Ethelheard himself.¶ Moved by the justice of his cause, there were not wanting many in the realm, who began by murmurings and discontent, to shew themselves disaffected to the rule of Ethelheard, and took part with Oswald, persuading him to enter the field against his usurping relation. This flattering advice was presently pursued by the ambitious youth, who, placing himself at the head of his party, broke out in open rebellion. After some short continuance of this civil war, Ethelheard and his army gained such ground upon Oswald, that, despairing of success, he gave up the struggle, leaving the realm in peace to his opponent, and soon after he deceased, which put a sudden end to all the late disturbance.\*\*

When Oswald had fled the kingdom, Ethelheard remained secure, and unrivalled in his dignity; the remaining part of his reign was spent in perfect peace and tranquillity, so that we find nothing more recorded of him, than that he reigned fourteen years, and died without issue, in the year of our Lord 742.††

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 725. & alia ut sup.

† Bede says, only thirty-seven years and some odd months. Redbourne and others say, thirty-eight.

‡ Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2.

§ Chron. Sax. sub anno 728.

¶ Brompton erroneously declares, that this Oswald was son to Ethelbald, king of

Mercia. In the Saxon Chronicle, his pedigree is more justly derived from Cerdic, thus: Oswald the son of Ethelbald; the son of Cynebald, the son of Cuthwin, the son of Ceawlin, the son of Cenric, the son of Cerdic. Chron. Sax. sub anno 728.

\*\* Chron. Sax. Malmfbury, Huntingdon, &c.

†† Chron. Saxon. &c. &c.

CUTHRED, *the thirteenth King of Wessex.*

A. D. 742. AFTER the death of Ethelheard, his brother Cuthred laid claim to the throne of Wessex, and succeeded easily in his design. The beginning of his reign was ushered in by dangerous troubles; for Ethelbald, the aspiring Mercian king, assaulted his realm, as well by open war, as private practices. Cuthred, the mean while, resisted the attempts of his enemy with unshaken resolution; so that after some short continuance of this disturbance, there ensued a sharp engagement between the two kings, where prodigious slaughter was made on either side. This calmed the fury of their minds, and led them to accept of conditions; for, as neither one nor the other chose to renew the battle, a fair agreement was presently made between them, and a firm-established peace was the result.\*

Ethelbald makes war upon Cuthred.

A. D. 744. When some time had elapsed from the first conclusion of this peace, Cuthred joined his forces with those of Ethelbald, and both these kings marched against the Britons, with whom they fought a great and bloody battle. The Britons, unable to resist the united power of the Saxons, fled from the field, and were pursued by their enemies, who made a prodigious slaughter. After this victory, the successful kings returned again to their own dominions, and remained peaceable for a considerable length of time.†

The Britons overcome.

A. D. 748. Four years of perfect tranquility followed in the kingdom of Wessex, when the domestic peace of Cuthred was disturbed by a very unhappy accident: Cynric, his eldest son, a youth of great spirit, bearing, as it seems, some high command in the army, behaved with such haughtiness, and carried his pride to so great a length, that a large party of the foldiers rose seditiously against him, complaining grievously of their oppression. In endeavouring to suppress this dangerous insurrection, Cynric himself was slain, to the great grief of his father.‡

Cynric, the son of Cuthred, slain.

A. D. 750. This trouble was soon after followed by another, of still more alarming a nature; for Æthelhun, a nobleman of great repute in the kingdom, taking offence at some proceedings of his sovereign, rose against him in open rebellion, and persuaded a large party of the people to espouse his cause. Cuthred, with his friends who continued faithful to him, marched against the seditious earl, and gave him battle; after a bloody engagement, the rebels were put to flight, and the king obtained a perfect victory. The earl now driven to the last distress, was forced to submit to his evil fortune; but the king, remembering mercy in the midst of ju-

The rebellion of Æthelhun.

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 741. Henry Huntingdon, lib. iv. &c.

† Ibid. Ibid. Et Chron. Vrvallensis, &c. &c.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 743. & Hunt. ut sup.

stice, generously forgave him the offence, and restored him again to all A. D. 750. his former honours. So great was the impressiion which this unexpected clemency made in the heart of Æthelhun, that, by his future actions, he gratefully strove to convince his master that his mercy was not bestowed in vain.\*

Shortly after Cuthred had composed all these domestic troubles, the A. D. 754. war broke out again afresh between him and Ethelbald, king of Mercia, his old enemy. Unbounded pride and ambition had blown up into a flame the latent sparks of resentment in the breast of the Mercian, so that without the least just cause he invaded Wessex, and distressed the borders with his cruel conquests; but it was not long before Cuthred met him with his army, and put a stop to the progress of his arms. At Beorgford he fought with the Mercians, and gained a complete victory. The success of Cuthred in this important battle, is said to have been chiefly owing to the great valour and conduct of Æthelhun, the nobleman who had rebelled against his sovereign, and was pardoned as we have seen above. Yet the conquest was not gained without considerable slaughter on either side.†

Ethelbald renews the war with the Saxons.

This defeat, far from preventing the designs of Ethelbald, served rather A. D. 757. to stimulate his ambition, and swell his pride beyond the bounds of reason and discretion. In about two years he had again recruited his army, and poured his forces upon the borders of Wessex. Cuthred marched against him, and proved successful in the war, causing his enemy to retreat as far as Sceandune,‡ where he gave him battle. A long and bloody conflict ensued, in which Cuthred and his party prevailed, and the Mercians were put to flight with the loss of their king, who is said to have been murdered by the treachery of one of his captains.§

The battle of Sceandune.

The last war of Cuthred was against the Britons, whom he overcame without much difficulty; for the wars which they sustained against the West Saxons and the Mercians, in the beginning of Cuthred's reign, and the misfortunes which had preceded that time, had so weakened their power, that they were not in any tolerable state of resistance.

The death of Cuthred.

When this prince had reigned gloriously near sixteen years, he departed from this life, in the year of our Lord 758, and left the kingdom without an heir.¶

### SIGEBRYHT, the fourteenth KING of Wessex.

A. D. 758.

UPON the death of Cuthred, a man of obscure birth, named Sige- bryht, made his way to the throne of Wessex. The success which

Sigebryht's evil government.

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 750, &c. &c. three miles from Tamworth, in Warwickshire.

† Chron. Sax. sub anno 753.

‡ This place is supposed to be about

§ Hunt. lib iv. Brompton, &c.

¶ Ibid. Ibid. Chron. Sax. sub anno



A. D. 758. crowned his attempt is the rather surprising, because his character is drawn in history as a cruel and tyrannical oppressor of the state. The ancient laws and constitution of the realm he endeavoured to pervert, and make subservient to his own detested ends. These unjust proceedings alarmed the nobles, and provoked his subjects in general; at last, an earl, named Cumbra, (a man of great spirit, and much respected by the people) reproved him freely for his evil conduct, and set before him the consequences of persisting in his errors; entreating him to hold the government with less rigour, because the whole nation was universally discontented, and daily murmurs from all sides filled the state. This spirited admonition, instead of meeting with a favourable reply, so highly exasperated Sygebryht against the unfortunate Cumbra, that he caused him to be put to a cruel death. This last imprudent step inflamed the minds of the people to such a degree, that throwing off all allegiance, they rose against the tyrant, and threatening vengeance, deprived him of all his regal honours, and drove him from the throne, before he had enjoyed the crown the space of one year.

The death of  
Sygebryht.

Sygebryht appears to have been as base and grovelling in adversity, as he was proud and imperious in prosperity: for, fearing the anger of his justly-exasperated subjects, he fled alone from Wessex in a mean disguise, fearfully avoiding the sight of man, and hiding himself in holes and caverns. At last, he took refuge in a large wood, on the borders of Kent, called Andredesweald, where, wandering obscurely about, he was met by a poor rustic, who had formerly been a servant of the murdered Cumbra, and the person of Sygebryht being known to him, out of zeal to revenge the wrongs of his late lord, he slew him upon the spot.\*

#### CYNEWULF, *the fifteenth King of the West Saxons.*

A. D. 758. CYNEWULF, a noble young man of the line of Cerdic, who was the chief leader of the sedition against Sygebryht, after his expulsion from the realm, laid claim successfully to the royal dignities, and with great prudence calmed the storm which was raised in the minds of the people by the late revolt, restoring peace and good order to the state. All the former part of his reign is passed over by the ancient historians, who have contented themselves with informing us, that he gained several great and important victories over the Britons, the particulars of which are nowhere specified; but by their fame, he extended his own consequence; and by his prudent government at home, secured the love of his subjects.†

Cynewulf's prudent govern-  
ment.

A. D. 775. In the seventeenth year of Cynewulf's reign, a war broke out between him and Offa, the ambitious king of Mercia, and a great battle was

The battle of  
Bensington.

\* Chron. Saxon. Ethelwerd, lib. ii. ton. J. Redbourne. Chron. Winton. Hen. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2. Chron. John Bromp- Hunt, lib. iv. &c. † Ib. ib. &c. †

fought by them near Benfington, in which Offa prevailed, and Cyne-A. D. 775.  
wulf was driven from the field: Offa pursuing his victory, took the  
town of Benfington, and held it as his own.\*

From this time to the end of his reign, Cynewulf enjoyed his dominions A. D. 787.  
in perfect tranquility. To which, perhaps, might be owing his unfortunate  
end; for, if in the former part of his government he is praised for his ju-  
stice and prudence, in the latter he is accused of giving way to his plea-  
sures, and relying with too much security on his prosperous state. The cause of  
Cynewulf's  
death. The  
constant smiles of fortune so sensibly affected his mind, that, forgetful of  
the slippery foundation of worldly grandeur, he overlooked those causes,  
which, though trifling in their beginning, ended at last in his final de-  
struction. For some offence which he took against Cyneheard, (the bro-  
ther of Sigebryht, the late king) he banished him from the kingdom.  
Cyneheard dissembling the matter, seemed willing to retire from Wessex:  
but meditating revenge, he prevailed upon a party of desperate ruffians  
to assist him in his undertaking; and accompanied with these, he returned  
privately to the court of Cynewulf, watching a proper opportunity to  
murder him. He had not been long concealed before he succeeded in  
his design; for the king one evening visiting a noble woman at Mer-  
ton, (who was his concubine) in a private manner, with only a few at-  
endants, he was narrowly watched by the conspirators, and when he had  
entered the house, they enclosed it round, and endeavoured to force the door.  
The king perceiving his danger, caused the entrance to be closely barred,  
and endeavoured by promises and fair words to prevail upon them to disperse;  
but when he saw that he could not succeed, and that the more kindly he  
spoke to them, the more vociferous were they in their vows and declara-  
tions of revenge, he ceased to argue, and determined with the few faithful  
servants who accompanied him, to sally out upon them, and set the hazard  
of his life upon the chance of war. This desperate resolution he executed,  
and rushing furiously from the house, encountered with Cyneheard him-  
self, whom he nearly killed; but being presently surrounded by the re-  
bellious crew, he was beaten down to the earth, and slain, all his fol-  
lowers sharing the same unfortunate fate. Yet some report of this dread-  
ful accident was soon noised abroad, and coming to the ears of two chief  
nobles of the realm, Osric and Wivern, they called the guards together,  
and hastened to revenge the death of their sovereign. When Cyneheard  
saw them approach, he sought by fair means to mitigate the matter, and  
in a long speech attempted to gloss over the heinousness of the crime,  
alleging, in excuse, the injuries he had received. But so thoroughly  
had the two loyal chieftains inflamed the minds of the soldiers with the  
spirit of resentment, that Cyneheard saw there was no hope left him of  
escaping, but what depended alone upon his sword; wherefore, encou-

\* The Saxon Chron. places this battle set it down in the twenty-fourth year of  
here. Brompton, Redbourne, and others, his reign.

A. D. 787. raging his companions to fight valiantly, the conflict was begun : and so desperately did the rebels support the charge, that the scales of victory hung a long time doubtful, till at last the cause of justice prevailed, and they were totally overcome ; Cyneheard himself, and eighty-eight of his companions, being slain upon the spot.\*

Cynewulf leaves  
no heir to the  
realm.

Cynewulf was murdered after he had reigned upwards of thirty years, in the year of our Lord 788. His body was taken up, and carefully conveyed to Winchester, where it was honourably buried. This prince was never married, so that at his death the kingdom was again destitute of a legal heir to the crown.†

### BEORHTRIC, *the sixteenth KING of* WESSEX.

A. D. 788. THE death of Cynewulf being known, Beorhtic, a nobleman descended from Cerdic, was by the favour of the people advanced to the government. This prince was a man of mild and affable temper ; the meekness of his disposition led him to prefer a life of peace and tranquillity, to that of war and disturbance : for this reason, he avoided all occasions of offence amongst the neighbouring states ; his equitable behaviour secured their respect to his character, and settled the happiness of his kingdom upon a solid basis.‡

The character of  
Beorhtic,

A. D. 791. By these proceedings Beorhtic established himself in the throne ; and that he might advance the welfare of his subjects, as also the better to put himself in a posture of defence, if any surrounding states might molest him, he made firm alliance with Offa, the great and powerful king of Mercia, espousing his daughter Eadburge, a woman of unbounded pride and haughtiness of soul. Yet it is the will of Heaven that human wisdom shall be often baffled, and those very pursuits which promise the most solid satisfactions, prove too frequently the fatal steps to ruin and destruction. Such was the fate of this unfortunate prince : that flattering alliance which appeared of so much importance to the state, far from producing the happiness he hoped for, ended at last in his own death.§

Beorhtic mar-  
ries the daugh-  
ter of Offa.

A. D. 792. Egbert, a noble young man, of an aspiring genius, who ruled at this time under Beorhtic, in a province of the West Saxons, by some means became offensive to Eadburge, and she neglected not to fill the king's mind with jealous fears concerning him. Egbert finding the danger he was in, left the kingdom, (advised to do so perhaps by Beorhtic himself) and went to the court of Offa ; but not meeting with the reception there which he thought suitable to him, he departed thence, and

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 755. Ethelwerd, lib. ii. Hen. Hunt. lib. iv. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2. Brompton, Redbourne, &c.

† Ibid. Ibid.

‡ Malmf. lib. i. cap. 2.

§ Rog. Hoveden, pars prior. M. West. Sax. Chron. Malmf. &c.

went into France, where he remained till, at the death of Beorhtric, A. D. 792. he was recalled into Wessex, to take the government of that kingdom upon him.\*

Soon after the marriage of Beorhtric, the piratical Danes (who so A. D. 793. grievously infested the kingdom in the succeeding times) first invaded South Britain, and landing upon the coast of Wessex, from three large ships, began to spoil the country. The governor who presided in these parts collected the chief of his forces together, and marched down to stop their progress; but engaging with them too rashly, he lost his own life, and his attendants were routed. This news being reported to Beorhtric, he, with the assistance of Offa, his father-in-law, came suddenly upon them, and drove them back to their ships with great loss: their flight was so precipitate, that all the spoils which they had taken from the inhabitants were left behind.†

The Danes, for the first time, land in Britain.

The imperious spirit of Eadburge was a constant vexation to the soul of Beorhtric; his love of peace, and the softness of his temper, being so diametrically opposite to the impatience and uncontrollable disposition of his queen, who, amongst other of her faults, was also a loose and wanton woman. The general report is, that jealousy in her amours was the cause of her husband's death; for, though the story is differently related by the ancient authors, yet in the chief circumstances it agrees. A noble youth in the king's court, who, as some affirm, had formerly been her favourite, gave her some great cause of displeasure; big with revenge, she continually worried the king with complaints against him; but finding that they made not the impression upon him which she desired, she resolved herself to destroy the unfortunate culprit; and the better to effect her wicked design, she poisoned a cup of liquor, which she intended to present him with: but, in the mean time, the king coming into the room, and being thirsty, took up the cup, and drank the poisoned draught. It was too late now to remedy the dreadful mistake; for the king presently after died, greatly lamented by his subjects, who, highly exasperated at the unhappy end of their monarch, enacted a law, that, from that time the king's wife should be deprived of all her privileges and honours, and should also cease to bear the name of queen.‡ This worthy prince reigned near sixteen years, and died without any issue.

The death of Beorhtric.

To avoid the fury of the incensed people, Eadburge fled into France, carrying with her a large quantity of treasure, and sought protection of Charles, who was then king of that country. But there following her vicious inclinations, Charles placed her in a monastery, where she shamefully committed adultery with a layman, and was, for that heinous crime,

Eadburge flies into France, her miserable death.

\* Reg. Hoveden, pars prior. M. West. Sax. Chron. Malm. &c.

† Ibid. Ibid.

‡ Asser. Annal. Hoveden. Mat. West. S. Dunelm, &c.

A. D. 793. expelled from thence, and after from the kingdom; when wandering into Italy, she died at Pavia, in extreme poverty and want.\*

A. D. 804. The history of Wessex thus far continued, our next step will be to commence the reign of Egbert, who succeeded Beorhtric in the kingdom, and by whose prowess the other six dominions of the heptarchy were overcome, and joined with this. But before we proceed in the history of this glorious prince, it will not be amiss to go regularly on with the accounts of those kingdoms which we have not spoken of as yet, and bring their annals down to the present important period.

The history of  
Wessex broke  
off, to pursue  
the other annals.

\* Afferius, who relates these matters as things himself had heard for truth, from those who were witnesses of the facts, also adds another circumstance: While (says he) she was in the court of France, Charles asked her whether she would wed him, or his son; to which she replied, Your son, of certainty, because he is younger.---Ah,

then! cries Charles, see how imprudent your peremptory choice hath been; had you chosen me, I would have given you my son; but now you have chosen him, you shall have neither. Having said this, he sent her to the monastery, from whence she was, for her adultery, expelled.

EASTSEX;

## E A S T S E X;

## THE FOURTH KINGDOM OF THE

## H E P T A R C H Y.

THE civil and military history of this kingdom, makes an appearance of such little consequence in the annals of the heptarchy, that scarcely more than a bare catalogue of the names of the several monarchs, can be collected from the imperfect accounts which are left us by the ancient authors. In its beginning it was held by Erchenwine, (its first founder) as feodary from Oëta, king of Kent; for we may recollect, that the counties of Essex and Middlesex (which form the greater part of this dominion) were given to Hengist, in ransom of Vortigern, detained by him after the massacre of the Britons upon the plains of Salisbury.\* But how long this dependance on Kent continued, or whether they ever asserted a state of separate freedom, cannot so easily be determined; but that they did, may appear most plausible, because when they were oppressed by the surrounding states, the kings of Kent seem quietly to have left them to their fate, and neither complained of the injury, nor stirred to revenge it; which it is most likely they would have done, had Eastsex yet been considered as a part of their own feodary state.

The little consequence of the kingdom of Eastsex.

I am thoroughly convinced that this dry narrative cannot be entertaining to the readers in general, and because it is impossible to supply these lamentable defects of ancient history, I shall pass over the whole account as quickly as possible, in order the sooner to arrive at the more important and interesting parts of the Chronicle.

The kingdom of the East Saxons contained the counties of Essex, Middlesex, and Herefordshire: on the east it is bounded by the German ocean, on the south by the Thames, on the west by Buckinghamshire, and on the north by Suffolk, the borders of the East Angles.

The extent of Eastsex.

ERCHENWIN, or ERCHWINE, (a noble Saxon, descended from A. D. 527. Woden) arrived in Britain about the year 527, with a strong party of German troops; and coming into these parts, settled here, holding the same of Oëta, the grandson of Hengist, who first led the Saxons into Britain.† He reigned peaceably sixty years, and left behind him a son, named Sleda.

\* Vide page 70, of this volume.

† Hen. Hunt. lib. ii. & Mat. West. sub anno 587.

- A. D. 587. **SLEDDA**, the second king of the East Saxons, succeeded his father, Erchenwine. This prince married Ricula, the daughter of Hermenric, the fourth of Kent. His reign was ten years.\*
- A. D. 597. **SEBERT**, the third king of Eastfex. This prince was the son of Sledda and Ricula; and immediately upon the death of his father, succeeded to the kingdom. By the persuasion of Ethelbert, king of Kent, (his uncle) joined with the doctrine of Miletus, he was converted to Christianity; being justly famous, as the first king of this district who embraced the true faith.† By his queen (whom some call Ethelgoda‡) he had three sons, who all-together succeeded him in the kingdom. Sebert reigned about eighteen years, and was buried, together with his queen, in the new church of St. Peter, at Westminster, which himself had built.§
- A. D. 615. The three sons of Sebert, namely **SERRED**, **SEWARD**, and **SIGEBERT**, after his death, took upon them the government of Eastfex. But far from following the pious example of their father, these wicked princes apostated from the Christian faith, and, amongst other enormities, drove Miletus from his see at London, because he resolutely refused to prophane the sacred rites of the communion. But they were not suffered long to triumph in their abominations; for, in a fatal war begun against the West Saxons, their forces were totally overcome, and they themselves slain in the field,|| about the year of our Lord 616,\*\* after a short reign of two years. Seward left two sons, one named Sigebert, who reigned after the death of his father and uncles; and the other, Sebba, who also succeeded after to the kingdom.
- A. D. 617. **SIGEBERT**, the seventh king of the East Saxons. This prince was surnamed the Little; but whether this title was bestowed upon him because he might be small in stature, or from his want of importance in the state, is a matter which must still remain doubtful. He appears to have reigned about eight and twenty years, and dying, left behind him a brother and a son, yet was not immediately succeeded by either in the kingdom.
- A. D. 645. **SIGEBERT** the Second, the eighth king of Eastfex, was the son of Sigebald, brother of Sebert. By the advice and persuasion of Oswy, king

\* Malmbsbury indeed makes Sledda the first king of Eastfex, without mentioning his father; but other authors have attributed the first beginning of this kingdom to Erchenwin; the latter, and more general, account, I have rather chose to follow. Vide Mat. West. Hunt. &c.

† Bede, lib. ii. cap. 3. Huntingdon, Mat. West. &c.

‡ Stow, Speed, and others.

§ Bede, &c. ut sup.

|| Bede, lib. ii. cap. 5, Malmbsbury indeed makes no mention of the third son: but the authority of Bede is sufficient. Vide Hen. Hunt. &c.

\*\* Mat. West. sub anno 616.

of Northumberland, he abandoned his superstitious idolatry, and became A. D. 645. a Christian. Besides his own piety, and love for the true faith, he took all occasions to promulgate the gospel amongst his subjects. These just and upright proceedings of Sigebert, however they might gain him the public love, failed not, on the other hand, to create him private foes : at the head of these were two of his kinsmen, who put him to death while he was visiting at one of their houses,\* after he had reigned about sixteen years. He left a young son, named Selred, who some time after succeeded to the crown.

SWITHELM, the son of Sexbald, the ninth king of the East A. D. 661. Saxons, was, after the murder of Sigebert, advanced to the throne. He received baptism at the hands of Ced, Ethelwald, king of the East Angles, being his godfather at the font. His reign was only three years, or thereabouts, and he died without issue.†

SIGHER and SEBBA succeeded Swithelm, and ruled jointly in East- A. D. 664. sex. Sigher was the son of Sigebert the Little, and Sebba the brother of of the same Sigebert. Sebba remained stedfast in the Christian faith, but his nephew following his vicious inclinations, continued in the idolatry of his forefathers, and repaired the ruined temples which were dedicated to their gods. However, at last, by the means of Wulfere, king of Mercia, who sent Janimanus, a learned bishop, to preach to Sigher and his people, they were again converted to the true faith, and the king continued constant in the same to the day of his death,‡ which happened in the year of our Lord 683,§ after he had reigned twenty-two years. He is said to have been married to Ofwith, the daughter of Ethelfrith, king of Northumberland, a devout woman, by whom he had one son, named Offa, who ruled in Eastsex some time after.

By the death of his colleague, Sebba was left alone in the kingdom, which, when he had governed thirty years in the whole, and eight from the decease of Sigher, he relinquished and exchanged his crown for a monkish cowl.¶ However, soon after dying, his body was honourably interred in the church of St. Paul, where his monument remained, till it was lost in the ruin of that venerable pile.\*\* He left behind him two sons, Sigehard and Senfred, who reigned after him.

SIGEHARD and SENFRED, after the abdication of their father, A. D. 691. took the government of the kingdom upon them; but the former tak-

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 22. Malmfbury, lib. i. cap. 6. Hen. Huntingdon, lib. ii. Brompton, &c.

† Malmf. ut sup. & Chron. J. Brompton,

‡ Malmf. ut sup. Bede, lib. iii. cap. 39.

H. Hunt. lib. ii. &c.

§ Mat. West.

¶ Bede, ut sup.

\*\* Vide Speed's Chron.



A. D. 691. ing up the cowl in the same monastery with his father, soon after his accession to the throne, his brother ruled alone the space of ten years, from his first entry.\*

A. D. 701. OFFA, the son of Sigher, the fourteenth monarch of the East Saxons, succeeded Senfred: he was a fine personable man, and of noble presence. After he had reigned seven years, he followed the enthusiastic spirit of the times, and left his queen, his kingdom, and his native land, to accompany Cenred, king of Mercia, and the bishop of Worcester, to Rome, where he became a monk.† Some say, that his wife, Kinfrith, the daughter of Penda, persuaded him to undertake this soul-saving pilgrimage; and immediately upon his departure, she herself, not in the least behind hand with her husband in superstition, took the veil upon her in the abbey of Kineburg, where her sister was abbess.‡

A. D. 708. SELRED, the fifteenth king of Eastsex, mounted the throne at the abdication of Offa; he was the son of Sigebert the Second, and proved a pious and just prince. After he had reigned thirty-eight years, he was slain by the treason of his subjects, who, by a long succession of peaceful days, were grown unruly, and headstrong in their disobedience, so that the virtues of their monarch became offensive; and even his clemency, which had prevailed upon him to forgive their former faults, was made the wicked plea by which his rebellious murderers sought to excuse the heinousness of their crime. He left neither wife nor issue behind him.§

A. D. 746. SWITHED, the sixteenth, and last, king of the East Saxons, was a nobleman of that realm, who, after the murder of Selred, took upon him the government. His reign was long, and undisturbed with war, until Egbert, the potent king of Wessex, (after having conquered Kent) made his way into Eastsex, and drove the aged monarch from his throne: the kingdom being left in such an unfavourable condition, was in no case able to resist the powerful arms of its invader.¶ From this time (namely, in the year of our Lord 823) Eastsex may be justly said to have ceased to be a distinct kingdom; for after its conqueror had subdued all its forces, he imposed his yoke upon the inhabitants, and joined the state to his own extensive dominions. And though some time after Sigeric and Sigehard, two noblemen of that district, revolted from Egbert, and began a rebellion in the realm, yet their power was presently crushed, and no effectual freedom resulted from their attempts; so that we can by no means review them as in a state of independence, or separation.

\* Vide Bede, H. Hunt. lib. ii. Chron. § Malmf. ut sup. Chron. Sax. sub anno J. Brompton. 746, &c.

† Bede, lib. v. cap. 20. Hen. Hunt. || Chron. Sax. sub anno 823. Malmf. lib. ii.

‡ Malmf. lib. i. cap. 6.

lib. i. cap. 6.

Thus ended the kingdom of the East Saxons, after it had endured the A. D. 746. space of two hundred and ninety-six years; though in the whole of this time, it never reached that exalted pitch of glory, which at some certain period so effectually distinguished the rest.

THE END OF THE KINGDOM OF THE EAST SAXONS.

NORTHUM-

# NORTHUMBERLAND;

THE FIFTH KINGDOM OF THE

H E P T A R C H Y.

The extent of  
Northumber-  
land.

**T**HE Kingdom of Northumberland contained the counties of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Northumberland. On the west it was bounded by the Irish sea, and on the east by the German ocean; on the south by the rivers Mersey and Humber, and on the north by Lindisdale Cheviot hills, and the river Tweed. At the beginning it was divided into two separate governments, Bernicia and Deira: the former stretching out from the Tweed to the Tyne; and the latter again from the Tyne to the Humber. But in the end both these districts were united into one.

From  
A. D. 494. king of the Britons, the entire subjugation of the northern insurgents,  
to  
A. D. 547. (who had so long distressed the southern parts of Britain) and made such fair promises of success, that Vortigern soon permitted him to send for additional supplies from Germany, that they might settle in Northumberland, in order the better to perform this important business. The king's consent being gained, Hengist invited his brother Osta into Britain, who presently obeyed the summons, and with his son Ebussa, accompanied with a strong troop of valiant Saxon youth, sailed from Germany, and landing in the northern parts of Britain, and (according to the directions of Hengist) settled there. Soon after their arrival, they received intelligence of the wars breaking out in the south, between the Britons and their countrymen, who had taken possession of those parts, under the conduct of Hengist: this they considered as a signal made to them, to shake off all the appearance of friendship which had hitherto subsisted between themselves and the Britons, who inhabited near them. 'Tis true, this friendship was rather a formal name, than an alliance founded on a permanent basis, even in its best state; for the Saxons had from their first arrival carried so high a hand, and been so tyrannical in their proceedings, that the disgusted Britons were thoroughly convinced of the insincerity of their professions of amity, and saw but too plainly the re-establishment of peace and freedom to the country was the least of the Saxons' intentions. It was but too soon that this last event entirely confirmed the suspicions of the Britons; for, throwing off all disguise, the treacherous Saxons took the field, commencing open hostilities, and declaring their resolutions to gain by the conquest of their swords, a large  
and

and ample provision for themselves and their families. This plain explanation of their designs gave a just alarm to the Britons, who, desirous of preserving their possessions from the destructive hands of their enemies, rose in arms, as hopeful to subdue them by war. But vain that hope! for the too provident invaders had made a secret league with their old and inveterate foes, the Scots and Picts, and both their powers joined, poured upon the wretched Britons. Unable to resist this combined force, they fled before them, and sought retreat in the lonesome woods, or solitary caverns, whilst the victorious enemy destroyed the country, pillaged the cities and towns, and murdered, without mercy, such of the miserable inhabitants as had spirit enough to resist their designs, or remonstrate on the injustice of them.

Driven to the greatest distress, the Britons saw (though now too late) the horrid effects of their mistaken policy; they saw they had invited, to a fruitful land, a set of men, who, regardless of their promises, were guided only by their own wants and ferocious ideas, and would not easily relinquish the advantages they had gained. They were now, as it were, hemmed in; on the south by Hengist and his army, whilst in the north their new-declared foes were preying upon them without mercy. These extremities caused the distressed Britons to take up arms, and enter into strong combinations against their enemies, which proceedings made, for a time, an alteration in the face of affairs; for, by the bravery of the British chiefs, some present advantage was gained. In this manner the war was continually kept up, sometimes the Britons, sometimes the Saxons, prevailing, for the space of fifty-three years; during which time, the former could not be overcome, nor the latter driven from the land.\*

The wars between the Britons and Saxons.

## IDA, the first KING of BERNITIA.

A. D. 547.

THIS long and troublesome war between the Britons and Saxons, kept up for such a succession of years, without any manifest advantage that might bring it to a final conclusion on either side, most likely in-

Ida arrives in Britain with a fresh party of Saxons.

\* During all this time there was none of the Saxon chiefs that presumed to take upon them the title of king, but were contented with that of *Deputogen*, or general. In some histories they are styled *Subreguli*, or petty kings. In the *Scala Chronica* is this remarkable passage: "Hengist having conquered Kent, sent his brother Osta, and his son Jebus, into Northumberland, and there they and their successors were dukes under the kings of Kent, unto such time as the pride of the Northanhumbes chose themselves a king, (by this word, I suppose, we must understand one of the

"*Subreguli*, before-mentioned) who was "*Hiring*, that begat *Wodnam*, that begat "*Witegils*, of whom came *Horri*, the king, "that begat *Uppa*, that begat *Heppa*, that "begat *Hermiger*, that begat *Bernak*; all "which were before the noble king *Ida*, "and the gestes of them before *Ida* be "little known by *Chroniques*." *Scala Chron. lib. ii.* Here are eight kings before *Ida* enumerated, but it is a great pity that we have not any other authority to prove it; at least, the author of the present account must have mistaken the title of king, for all the best accounts declare *Ida* to have been the first.

duced

A. D. 547. duced the latter to send pressing invitations to their friends in Germany, that they might come over into Britain, and assist them in the conquest of that country, for which they had so long been struggling without compleat success. Either moved by such invitations, or actuated by his own ambition, Ida, a valiant Saxon, (descended from Woden) sailed from Germany, with a powerful reinforcement, and landed at Flamborough, where he joined his countrymen, by whom he was received with the greatest joy.\* The arrival of Ida, who was also accompanied with his twelve sons, caused a speedy alteration in the affairs of the Saxons; for the hapless Britons, weakened daily by their continual wars, and depressed with the melancholy prospect of their falling state, were no longer able to resist their increasing foes; who, on the other hand, inspired with fresh courage, by the assistance of their new come friends, renewed the war with uncommon cheerfulness and alacrity.

Ida assumes the  
title of king.

Thus quickly did the additional forces of the Saxons compleat their conquest and secure their success, for the Britons were driven finally from their possessions, and the conquerors presently over-run Northumberland, and the adjacent counties, settling themselves in the abandoned estates, and erecting a powerful kingdom of their own. Ida, to whom they chiefly owed their rapid success, was the first who assumed the title of a king, and bore his rule over all Bernitia. The better to secure the borders of his kingdom, he repaired the castle of Beddanborough, which heretofore was only fenced round with wooden pales, and set up a strong wall of stone about the same.† The reign of this prince was not idly spent, for continual wars and tumults kept him in the field. The Britons, though they were oppressed, and driven from their possessions, were not totally overcome; they yet continued to annoy the Saxons; and issuing from their retreats in large parties, disturbed their peace with constant alarms. It is true, by the vigilance and conduct of Ida, they were prevented from making any important conquests; yet those repeated attacks upon the borders of his kingdom, rendered the state of his subjects, not only uncomfortable, but even unsafe.

A. D. 559. Ida deceased after he had reigned twelve years. His issue was twelve sons, six of them by his queen, whose name is not mentioned; as Adda, who succeeded him in Bernitia; Ethelric and Theodoric, who also both succeeded some time after; Etheric, Omerno, and Theofredum: his other six sons were illegitimate, and their names were Oga, Alric, Eccha, Ofbald, Segora and Segothæ; all these came with their father in twelve ships from Germany, and assisted him first in his early conquests, and after in the support of his kingdom.‡

The death and  
issue of Ida.

\* Chron. Sax. Ethelwerd, Malmf. &c. † Mat. West.

‡ Ib. Ib. Huntingdon, lib. ii. &c.

*ADDA, the second KING of BERNITIA, and ÆLLE, the first KING of DEIRA.*

PRESENTLY after the death of Ida, Adda, his eldest son, succeeded A. D. 560. him in his dignity; and in the first year of his reign, Ælle, a noble chieftain, and relation of Ida (who had accompanied him into Britain, and been greatly assisting in his conquests) made war upon the Britons that possessed the province of Deira, and drove them out with a powerful hand. He and his followers immediately settled in that deserted country, which they had gained with their swords; and Ælle took upon himself the title of king, advancing the glory of his new realm by various important conquests.\* During the reign of Ælle, Adda, king of Bernitia, died, after a reign of seven years, and was succeeded by four other princes, of whom we find nothing more recorded than their names, and the number of years which they ruled, as follows:

GLAPPA, the cousin of Adda, the third king of Bernitia, succeeded A. D. 567. Adda, and reigned five years.

THEODWALD, brother to Glappa, the fourth king of Bernitia, A. D. 572. reigned one year.

FRETHULF, the second brother of Glappa, the fifth king of Bernitia, A. D. 573. reigned seven years.

THEODRIC, the third son of Ida, was the sixth king of Bernitia, he A. D. 580. reigned seven years.†

*ÆLLE, the first KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.*

AFTER the death of these five princes, Ælle reigned sole king of Northumberland, bearing rule over Bernitia and Deira: but whether he obtained this additional dignity by force, or the consent of the people, cannot be determined; yet the latter appears most probable, from the perfect tranquility in which he enjoyed his state to the end of his life. He died after a reign of near thirty years, twenty-seven of which he ruled only in Deira, and the rest in both the kingdoms united together. He had issue, Edwine, the glorious king of Northumberland, and a daughter, named Acca, who was after married to Ethelfrith, king of Northumberland.‡

*ETHELRIC, the second KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.*

ETHELRIC, the second son of Ida, who had spent the whole of his A. D. 589. youth in retirement and obscurity, after the decease of Ælle, was, in his old age, called forth to take upon him the kingly dignities. He succeeded in the government of both the kingdoms, and reigned near

\* Chron. Sax. Malmbury, Hen. Hunt. Mat. West. &c.

† Matthew of Westminster, &c.

‡ Ibid. &c.

- A. D. 589. five years in profound peace :\* at the end of which time, worn out with old age, he departed this life; leaving two sons behind him; the eldest, Ethelfrith, who ruled after his death; and Tedbald, a valiant youth, slain by the Scots, in the reign of his brother, at the battle of Dægstane.

ETHELFRITH, *the third King of Northumberland.*

- A. D. 593. **ETHELFRITH**, the son of Ethelric, succeeded his father in both the kingdoms. The better to secure his throne, (and to prevent all disturbance from young Edwine, the son of Ælle, and lawful heir to the crown of Deira) he married Acca, the daughter of Ælle, beginning his reign with great glory. This prince, because of his ambition and insatiate love of war, was surnamed Fierce;† how well this appellation became him, we shall see hereafter.

*He wars successfully against the Britons.*

His first wars were supported ten years against the Britons, whom he overcame; and so dreadfully distressed, that, flying from their possessions, and abandoning the places of their births, the greater part of them wandered in poverty from place to place in search of secret, though miserable, retreats; whilst others, unwilling to leave their native homes, submitted to the yoke of the conqueror, chusing rather to endure the cruelties of his oppressive hands, than seek a life of freedom, accompanied with misery and pinching want. Ethelfrith pursued his fortune with uncommon ardour, and subdued more of the British countries than any single Saxon king had done before him.‡

- A. D. 603. His conquests were so rapid, and of such importance, that they drew upon him the jealousy of the Scots and their neighbours; who, that they might, if possible, suppress his rising glory in the bud, collected their forces together, and took the field against him. With their whole army (headed by Ægthan, king of the Scots) they advanced to give him battle. Nor was Ethelfrith unprepared to receive them, for, with all his powers, he met them at a place called Dægstane, where a long and bloody conflict ensued; great was the prowess, and desperate the resolution on either side; but in the end, after prodigious slaughter, the fortune of Ethelfrith still smiled upon him, and victory crowned his labours: on the other hand, the Scots, unable to resist, were chased from the field, with such considerable loss, that for a long time after they found themselves in no condition to renew the war. Yet this victory was not obtained without great loss of blood on the Saxons' side; for, in the beginning of the battle, Tedbald, the brother of Ethelfrith, was slain, and all that part of the army which he commanded, were put to the rout.§

*He overcomes the king of the Scots.*

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 588. Malmf. Hunt. &c.

† Qui vocatus Ferox. H. Hunt. lib. ii.

‡ Bede, lib. i. cap. 34. Hen. Hunt. lib. ii. & alia.

§ Bede, ut sup. Chr. Sax. an. 603. &c.

The former victory, though so dearly purchased, was far from checking the arduous pursuits of fame which engaged the mind of Ethel-frith. When four years were elapsed, he marched again towards the Britons, and at Cairlegion overthrew their army with great slaughter. Before the beginning of this decisive battle, the monks of Bangor monastery, which was not far from thence, were, assembled together, and with humble prayer besought Almighty God to assist their Christian brethren, the Britons, and repel the fierce invader, who, big with the fame of his former conquests, was proudly advancing to destroy them from the land. Their actions and gestures exciting the attention of Ethel-frith, he demanded of his chiefs what those men were, and what their employment? When he received for answer, that they were priests, who with prayers and supplications, were invoking the assistance of their God, and encouraging their friends by their constant devotions. "If that is the case," (says Ethelfrith) they are also dangerous enemies; for though they are not armed with swords or spears, yet do they fight against us with prayers and imprecations; therefore, destroy them first, and proceed we after to encounter with their armed forces." The king's command was presently obeyed; for a strong party of the Saxon soldiers fell upon them, and at the first onset, Brocmail, the captain of the guard, (who was set to prevent the enemies from disturbing the pious duties of the monks) deserted his post, and the whole of the guard following the example of their chief, fled away, and left their charge to the relentless fury of the enemy, who immediately put twelve hundred of them to the sword; fifty only saved themselves by flight.\*

The Britons again overcome, and the slaughter of the monks of Bangor.

All these important victories, which crowned the labours of Ethel-frith, increased the consequence of his government, and raised his glory to such a height amongst the surrounding powers, that none of them chose to molest him. This pacific disposition of his neighbours gave him leisure more closely to examine his affairs at home: with a jealous eye he regarded young Edwine, the son of Ælle, and brother to his queen; he well knew the right which he had to Deira, the kingdom which his father had gained by the conquest of his sword. This bar to his happiness he resolved to remove; for he considered the changeableness of his subjects' tempers, and found his rival daily advancing in popular favour. Such reflections led him naturally to conclude, that the sparks of ambition, which he plainly saw lay smothered in the breast of Edwine, would, when advantage served, burst out into a flame, and cause him to assert his natural right, by raising a civil commotion in the state, which might endanger both his crown and life. Aspiring men will readily sacrifice all justice to ambition, and if the least fear should reign in their jealous minds, which might seem likely to affect the glory of their

Young Edwine flies from Northumberland.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 2. Chron. Sax. sub anno 607.



A. D. 616. state, there is nothing but the final removal of the object that can give them ease, or make them think themselves secure. Such suspicions caused Ethelfrith to resolve upon the death of Edwine; but he, by some means being made acquainted with the danger of his situation, fled from Northumberland, accompanied with his wife, wandering from place to place, taking refuge at last in the court of Redwald, king of the East Angles. Redwald, persuaded by his queen, refused to deliver up the fugitive prince to the messengers of Ethelfrith, who were sent to demand him at his hands, or denounce war against him and his realm, in case he gave him protection.

A. D. 617. Redwald, provoked at the insolent carriage of Ethelfrith, not only preserved Edwine from the malice of his enemy, but finally assisted him in the recovery of his native right: for, gathering his army together as hastily as possible, he followed the messengers of Ethelfrith with such expedition, that they had scarcely time to relate the ill success of their embassy, before the alarm was given of his approach. Astonished at the sudden danger which threatened his state, the Northumber collected speedily what forces he could, and advanced to stop the progress of his enemies. Both armies met upon the banks of the river Idle,\* where they fought a cruel battle, in which Regenhier, the son of Redwald, lost his life. Yet the end proved fortunate to Redwald and his party, for Ethelfrith himself was slain in the field, and after his death his forces made but little resistance. This victory, joined with the death of Ethelfrith, entirely cleared the passage of Edwine to the throne of Northumberland; for the sons of the unfortunate king, hearing of their father's death, were apprehensive for their own safety, and left the kingdom, seeking in other parts a place of refuge.

Ethelfrith slain in battle.

Ethelfrith had reigned four and twenty years when he was slain. By Acca, his wife, the sister of Edwine, he had seven sons; Eanfred, afterwards king of Bernitia; Oswald, after king of Northumberland; Ofwine, Oslae, Oswid, Ossa, and Offa;† also two daughters, canonized for saints, Oswitha and Ebba. Besides these, by his concubine he had another son, named Oswy, who also ruled in Northumberland.‡

#### EDWINE, the fourth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 617. ETHELFRITH being dead, and his sons departed from Northumberland, there remained no further obstacle to stop the progress of Edwine, who, through the assistance of Redwald, his friend, was presently advanced to the throne. Deira he took as his own lawful right, the province of Bernitia he usurped, and held with a powerful hand. Edwine was now in the twenty-third year of his age, a man of vast ambition, and

Edwine advanced to the throne of Northumberland.

\* Near Nottingham.

† Matt. West. sub anno 588.

‡ Vide Speed, &c.

as valiant to execute his great designs, as he was forward in conceiving A. D. 617. them. He subdued all the neighbouring coasts, whether they were inhabited by the Britons, the Saxons, the Scots, or the Picts, and extended his conquests farther than any English king had ever done before him. Amongst other of his important actions, he subjugated the Orkades and Mevanian islands,\* adding them to his own dominions.

Cwenburhga, the first wife of Edwine, died whilst he was with Red-A. D. 625. wald, in the kingdom of the East Angles, so that now he began to think of a second marriage: and hearing great praises bestowed upon Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent, as well for her singular beauty, as for her virtue and piety: he sought her for the consort of his bed, and obtained the consent of her brother, on condition that she should be permitted to retain her own religion (she being a Christian) without interruption, and have Christian attendants, as well as priests, about her in his court. All these particulars being agreed upon, the lady was sent into Northumberland, and married to Edwine in the year of our Lord 625, by whose pious example his heart was the more readily opened to the conviction of the sacred truths contained in the gospel.†

*Edwine marries a second wife.*

The year after, Edwine very narrowly escaped being murdered by a A. D. 626. desperate fellow, named Eumer, said to have been sent to his court for that purpose, by Cwichelm, who ruled jointly with his father Cynegils, in the kingdom of Wessex. This prince envying the increasing success and glory of Edwine, and fearing the lengths to which his ambition might lead him, resolved in a treacherous manner to deprive him of his life, and put a sudden end to all his conquests. The wicked Eumer, (to whom the performance of this murder was committed) entered the palace of Edwine, near the banks of the river Derwent, in Yorkshire, where he kept his court, it being Easter day, the traitor came in before the king as an ambassador, who had matters of great importance to deliver from his master: whilst the king was listening attentively to his conversation, he suddenly drew out a poisoned dagger,† and struck at him; but Lilla, one of the king's servants, who was standing by, and seeing the danger of his sovereign, thrust himself suddenly between him and the weapon. But with such force had the murderer made his blow, that the faithful Lilla was thrust upon his lord, and the dagger passing through his body, wounded Edwine also. The alarm was presently given, and the traitor was surrounded by the king's guards, but yet, before he was beat down to the earth, he slew another of Edwine's servants, named Fordhere, who had hastened to the assistance of his master. The wound which the king received was

*Edwine in great danger of assassination.*

\* Now called the Hebrides. Bede, Ecc. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 9. & Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3.

† Bede, ut sup.

† "Habebat sciam bicipitem toxicatam," are the very words of Bede. Vide lib. i. cap. 9.

A. D. 626. not dangerous ; and Paulinus, the bishop, who attended on Ethelburga, the queen, omitted no opportunity, of persuading him to renounce his errors, and embrace Christianity ; therefore, he took the present occasion of repeating his importunities : to which Edwinc gravely replied, “ If the God whom you and the Christians serve will grant me the victory against that king, who hath sent his murderer to kill me, I will adore and worship him alone.” In pledge thereof, he delivered to Paulinus, his infant daughter, (who was born the very night after this alarming accident had happened) that she might be baptized.\*

A. D. 627. As soon as Edwinc was recovered from the wound which he had received, he called his army together, and went against the West Saxons, with whom he fought a battle, and either slew, or took, all those who had intended his murder, returning victoriously home : but yet he did not embrace Christianity till the year following, when he was baptized together with all his household, by Paulinus, the bishop, on Easter, in the year of Christ 627.†

Edwinc receives baptism.

The happy effects of Edwinc's prudent government.

Whilst the glory of Edwinc's important conquests kept the surrounding nations in a state of profound tranquility, by his prudent government at home he maintained the most perfect peace and good order. He caused justice to be so duly administered, that thefts and oppressions were not heard of in the kingdom : a woman unguarded might have travelled from one end of the land to the other, without the least fear or danger. Amongst other things for the public good, he caused ladles of iron and bras to be fastened by the side of such springs and fountains as were near the main roads, that the travellers might drink and refresh themselves, and no man dared to touch them but for his present use. Not only in time of war, but even in peace, he caused a triumphal banner to be borne before him as he rode from town to town, and from province to province, in order to see that no injustice prevailed amongst the several magistrates of each district.‡

A. D. 633. After several years spent in peace, Penda, the restless monarch of the Mercians, envying the glory of Edwinc's reign, persuaded a British king, named Cadwallo, who ruled in those provinces conquered by Edwinc, to rebel against him, promising himself to be assistant in the wars. The hopes of regaining his liberty, and shaking the yoke of Edwinc from his subjects' shoulders, was an affair of such consequence, that Cadwallo presently agreed ; and calling together all such as were animated with the sound of freedom, he took the field, and began with fire and sword to disturb the borders of Edwinc's dominion. Incensed to the highest degree at this alarming revolt, Edwinc placed himself at the head of his army, and marched against the rebels, in order to chastise their vio-

The death of Edwinc.

\* Bede, ut sup. &c.

† Bede & Chron. Sax. sub anno 627.

‡ Bede, lib. ii. cap. 16.

lence,

lence, and reduce them again to bondage. In the mean time, Penda, A. D. 633. agreeable to his promise, had joined his forces with the Britons: thus united, they fearlessly abode the approach of Edwine and his army. At a place called Hethfild, Edwine came up with the revolvers, and in a desperate battle there fought against them, lost his life; with him also Osfrid, his eldest son, was slain: after the death of the king and his son, the whole army was put to flight. Cadwallo and Penda having obtained the victory, pursued their fortunes with the utmost cruelty. Egfrid, another of Edwine's sons, was unfortunately taken in the field, and with great inhumanity put to death by the command of Penda.\*

These merciless conquerors entered the kingdom of Northumberland, and with fire and sword destroyed the country, sparing none, however innocent; in the fatal ruin, both women and children perished, equally with those who were capable of bearing arms. Whilst Northumberland was thus miserably ravaged, Paulinus, the bishop, with queen Ethelburga, under the conduct of Bassus, a valiant chief, fled from the kingdom, and returned again by water into Kent, where they were well received by Edbald, her brother, who was yet living there.†

Edwine was slain in October, A. D. 633, in the forty-eighth year of his age, after he had reigned upwards of sixteen years with the greatest splendour and renown. He was twice married; his first wife was Cwenburga, the daughter of Ceorl, king of Mercia,‡ who became his consort whilst he was yet a youth, and died before he was king: by this lady he had issue, two sons; Osfrid, the eldest, was slain in the same battle wherein his father fell; and Egfrid, who was cruelly put to death by Penda, contrary to all humanity, or the law of arms. The second wife of Edwine was Ethelburga, (surnamed Tace) the only daughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent: she was married to him in the year 625, and outlived him several years. After his death she returned to Kent, and at a place called Lymming, (not far from the sea-side) built a monastery of nuns, amongst whom she spent the remainder of her life in pious duties, secluded from the world. By this excellent lady, Edwine had two sons and two daughters; Ethelm, the eldest son, died in his youth; Utkfrea, the other son, after the death of Edwine, (being then but a child) was carried by his mother into Kent, from whence he was sent to the court of Dogobert, king of France, where he died: Enfleda, the eldest daughter, and first child which Ethelburga bore to Edwine; was born on that very night in which her father was wounded by Eumerus; she was afterwards married to Oswy, the sixth king of Northumberland: Ethelrida, the youngest daughter, died in her infancy.§

The cruelty of the conquerors.

The wives and issue of Edwine.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 20.

† Ibid.

‡ Thus says Bede, with whom the Chr. Univalensis agrees; though Malmsbury,

Hen. Hunt. Mat. West. and others, declare she was not the daughter of Ceorl, but of Crida, his grandfather.

§ Bede, ut sup.

EANFRID,

EANFRID, *the sixth KING of BERNITIA, and OSRIC, the second KING of DEIRA.*

A. D. 633.

The kingdom  
of Northum-  
berland again  
divided

AFTER that Edwine was slain, and the inhuman conquerors were fatigued with the effusion of blood which they had caused, they retired from Northumberland, which unhappy province began once more to recover from her late calamities. Eanfrid, the eldest son of Ethelfrith, and Osric, the son of Elfric, uncle to Edwine, returned from the north, where they (with the other sons of Ethelfrith) had taken refuge, when Edwine ascended the throne of Northumberland, and divided the kingdom between them; Eanfrid began his rule in Bernitia, whilst Osric assumed the government of Deira.\*

The apostacy  
and death of the  
two kings.

These two princes, during their stay in Scotland, had been converted to the Christian faith; but no sooner had they received the kingly dignities, than they apostated from their former profession and belief, returning again to the idolatry of their ancestors. But their triumph over the spoils of religion was not of long continuance; for Cadwallo, the British king, grown haughty and imperious by his former conquest, resolved again to enter the borders of Northumberland, and pull down the faithless monarchs from their throne. Like a sudden storm he came upon them, renewing his former cruelties; first, Osric, who was unprepared to oppose him, was slain in his own city; and passing thence, the victorious tyrant over-ran Deira: not like a generous warrior, who amidst his conquests would remember mercy, but like a ruthless savage, whose sole delight was blood and carnage! This impending danger affrighted Eanfrid, who finding himself entirely unable to resist the marches of his foe, was determined to try if by his gentle deportment and submission he could soften the ferocious temper of Cadwallo; wherefore, attended only by twelve soldiers, he went to the British camp, but Cadwallo, when he had got the unfortunate king in his power, caused him (contrary to all faith and justice) to be put to death. The dire misfortunes of this fatal year rendered it so odious to the Northumbers, that their historians have either not mentioned, or hastily passed over, all these transactions, as too cruel and shocking to be more particularly set down.† Neither of these kings seem to have left any issue behind them.

A. D. 634.

OSWALD, *the fifth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.*

Oswald deter-  
mines to defend  
Northumber-  
land.

OSRIC and Eanfrid being thus miserably put to death, the inhuman Cadwallo continued to ravage the kingdom of Northumberland without opposition. Hopeless and deserted, the unhappy people were not able to oppose him. Without a king! without a leader! in divided parties they fled away, seeking only to avoid the approach of the British army. Now had the kingdom sunk, but Oswald, the son of Ethelfrith, and brother of the slaughtered Eanfred, rose its champion, and rescued

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 1.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 30.

it from distress. Pierced to the soul by the cries of his afflicted country, A. D. 634. he determined, with the assistance of some valiant soldiers, gloriously to redeem his native land from her savage oppressor, or die with the honour of an attempt so truly laudable. His early years were spent in Scotland, where he had taken refuge from the anger of Edwine, and there he not only gained great experience in the arts of war, but also learnt the sacred doctrines of religious truth. This excellent nobleman was as justly famous for his singular zeal and piety, as for his bravery and conduct in the field of battle.\*

Cadwallo thinking himself secure in his conquests, and not in the least suspecting that any should be found hardy enough to oppose him, set no bounds to his oppression; but ere he was aware, and even in the very midst of his exalted boastings, Oswald with his little army approached his camp. Pious supplications, and humble prayers to God for success, were the first weapons which Oswald and his followers used against their foes; and after these duties were finished, they joyfully began the engagement, with such undaunted courage, as seemed to preface the victory. For their country, their friends, their lives, and their glory, fought the valiant Saxons; and on the chance of this decisive battle depended all their future welfare. Concerns so important, must warm the hero's breast, and drive the sense of danger from his soul. Such was the effect they had upon the minds of Oswald and his host; for, with uncommon resolution, they supported the encounter, and though oppressed by numbers, thought not of flight. The battle being long continued, ended at last in favour of Oswald; for Cadwallo, with the chief of his officers, were slain in the field, and the rest of his enormous army routed. This glorious action was performed at a place (no great distance from the wall of Severus) called Denisburn, because it was near the banks of a little river, named Denis, which ran into the Tyne. The salutary effects which accrued to the Northumbers from this victory caused the inhabitants in after times to name the place Heaven Field, as supposing Oswald was assisted by supernatural aids.†

Oswald over-comes Cadwallo and his forces.

Oswald having thus rescued Northumberland from its ruined plight, A. D. 635. and brought with him the blessings of peace, to which they had some time been strangers, with joyful gratitude they saluted him king; and he was received with equal love, both by the inhabitants of Bernitia and Deira: yet these provinces hated each other, as jealous, perhaps, of the fame which either might separately acquire; but Oswald prudently healed the breach, and united them both by the permanent bond of love and friendship; so that he began his reign with the greatest splendour. When he had seated himself in the throne, he thoroughly reformed the manners of his subjects, and sent for a learned Scot, named Aidan, to teach his subjects the gospel dispensations in their utmost purity; and his pious designs were crowned with the greatest success.‡

Oswald made king of Northumberland.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. c. 1 & 2.  
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† Ib. ib.

‡ Ibid. cap. 6.

A. D. 635. The sudden conquest of the British army, with the death of Cadwallo, gained Oswald the respect, or fear, of his neighbours; which was still more confirmed by his prudent government after he had ascended the throne. The Britons, the Scots, and the Picts, submitted to his rule; and over the English he assumed the title of monarch: yet amidst all these glorious advancements he still retained his former affability, and moderated his actions by the strictest justice. He was gracious to all who were in want of assistance, and particularly bountiful to strangers and travellers; so that his fame was spread throughout the land, whilst at home he was honoured and revered by all his subjects.\*

A. D. 641. Penda, the ferocious king of Mercia, provoked at the death of his colleague, Cadwallo, and still more incensed at the prosperity of Oswald, whom he had constantly beheld with an envious eye, was now determined to make war upon him. The purposes of Penda being known, and hostile preparations made on both sides, the armies met at a place called Maserfield, in Shropshire, where a long and bloody battle was fought: Penda proved victorious, and the unfortunate Oswald being slain in the field, all the Northumbrian forces were routed. Not content with the conquest he had gained, and the death of Oswald, Penda caused his breathless body to be mangled and cut to pieces, and hung upon poles near the place where he was slain; which losing its former name of Maserfield, was after called Oswalds-tree.† Such was the death of this pious prince, (whose loss was greatly lamented by his subjects and allies) after he had reigned nine years. This fatal accident happened the 5th day of August, in the year of our Lord 642, and in the thirty-eighth year of Oswald's age.‡

The burial of Oswald.

After the departure of Penda, the mangled limbs of Oswald were carefully gathered up, and at the command of Osfrida, (queen of Mercia, and daughter to Oswine, his half-brother) buried with great solemnity in the monastery of Bradney, in Lincolnshire; but afterwards they were removed to Gloucester; and there interred, in the north side of the choir of the cathedral church.§

The wife and issue of Oswald.

The wife of Oswald was named Kineburg, a virtuous lady, daughter to Cynegils, the first Christian king of the West Saxons: she was married to him in the year 636, the third of his reign. By this lady he had one son, named Ethelwald, who was born in the fourth year of his father's reign, and was yet an infant at his death; he afterwards seized upon the kingdom of Deira, and held it to himself.||

\* Bede, ut sup.

† This place is now a fair market town in that county. Vide Camden in Shropshire.

‡ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 9.

§ Ibid. cap. 11.

|| The Chron. Urivalensis mentions another son of Oswald, named Dunwald, without any further circumstance.

## OSWEO, KING of BERNITIA, and OSWIN, KING of DEIRA.

OSWEO, the illegitimate son of Ethelfrith, surnamed the Fierce, succeeded his half-brother, Oswald, in the kingdom of Bernitia; whilst in Deira, Oswine, the son of Osric, assumed the government. These two princes were of opposite dispositions, for Osweo was of a fierce and turbulent spirit, ambitious of power, and envious of others: whilst on the other hand, Oswine was meek and amiable; by his civil deportment he secured the esteem of his subjects, and he was particularly beloved by all those who were intimately acquainted with him. These virtues caused Osweo to look upon him with a suspicious eye; and when seven years were elapsed, in which time Oswine had governed Deira in peace with the greatest prudence, the other, envious of his glory, and finding that he daily gained ground in the good-will of the Northumbers, began, by various outrages, to trouble his reign.\*

A. D. 642.  
Osweo grows  
jealous of Os-  
wine.

It was long before the designs of Osweo could take effect, for the meek disposition of Oswine caused him to put up with many insults before he could be wrought upon to commence hostilities against his unlawful oppressor. But at last, being beyond measure provoked, he was obliged to break through his peaceable determinations, and prepare for war: but here Osweo had greatly the advantage over him, for as it had long been his intention to provoke him to battle, he had of course provided a sufficient strength to resist his army; so that when Oswine took the field, he was soon made acquainted with the superiority of Osweo's power, therefore, desirous of sparing Christian blood, he declined engaging with him; and because his people would have persuaded him to abide the fortune of the war, he withdrew privately from the camp, accompanied only by one single servant, named Condhere, and took up his abode in the house of an earl, named Humwald, for whom he had a great esteem, and thought himself perfectly secure in his friendship.†

A. D. 650.  
Osweo provokes  
Oswine to de-  
clare war.

After their king had forsaken them, the Deirian army disbanded themselves, and returned home, resolving to wait patiently the end of all these proceedings. Therefore, Osweo advanced with his forces, and easily took possession of great part of the country; but in the mean time, Humwald, with whom Oswine had taken refuge, resolved to deliver him up to his enemy; for, like a mercenary traitor, he saw from the rising fortune of Osweo, great expectations might be formed, whilst from Deira's forsaken prince he had nothing to hope for: therefore, interest soon prevailed over his duty, and the desire of future reward over every sense of gratitude and humanity. Osweo being informed by this detestable traitor where the unfortunate Oswine was to be found, caused him pre-

A. D. 651.  
Oswine betrayed  
into the hands  
of Osweo, by  
whom he is put  
to death.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 14. † Bede, ut sup. & Vita Oswini, MS. in Bib. Cotton. infig. Julius A. x.



A. D. 651. sently to be put to death, at a place called Ingithling, on the third of September, in the year 651, and the ninth of his reign.\*

A. D. 653. When Ofweo had thus removed the chief bar to his ambitious designs, he took upon himself the government of Deira; yet after he had held it the space of two years, with some difficulty, a new enemy, and that a formidable one, rose up against him, which was Ethelwald, the son of Oswald, who at the death of his father was left an infant, and by Ofweo (his uncle) secluded from the government. But now arrived at the age of sixteen, and being a youth of uncommon abilities, as well as great courage, he took the advantage of the discontents which prevailed in Deira, and coming thither, set up his claim to the kingdom against his uncle. The people were all glad of a pretext which wore the face of justice, to shake off the yoke which Ofweo had imposed upon them, and therefore presently acknowledged him for their king; for they detested Ofweo, as the murderer of their lawful sovereign, and the cause of all their present disquiets. Ethelwald thus elected to the regal dignity, held the realm with a powerful hand, so that Ofweo, with all his combined forces, was not able to dispossess him of his state; but after repeated struggles, in which no great advantages were gained, he was obliged to desist from further molestation.†

A. D. 654. No sooner was this trouble subsided, than fresh alarms called Ofweo to the field again; for Penda, the mortal enemy of Northumberland, renewed his former wars; and after several ruining invasions, reduced Ofweo to such dreadful extremities, that, fearful of taking the field against him, he sought all the means that he could to pacify his fury, and bring him to accept conditions of peace; but all his rich gifts were refused, and his fair promises made in vain; for the savage Mercian would listen to no proposals, as disdainful to treat with one who was already in his power. To add to the distress which now fell heavy on Ofweo, his professed enemy, Ethelwald, king of the Deirians, with his army joined Penda, and with him took part against his uncle and his country. Affairs grown desperate, no hope was left to Ofweo, but what depended on the fortune of war; death was before him if he yielded to the enemy, and destruction to the kingdom. By flight, indeed, he might, perhaps, have saved his own life; but this was a thought so disgraceful, that he could not harbour it: therefore, with a few valiant men, aided by his son Alcfrid, he determined to trust the whole of his fortune on one decisive battle, when offering up humble prayers and hearty vows to God, he led his little army to the field.

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 14. Vita Oswini. † Bede, ut sup. Malmf. Hunt. &c. Brompton, &c.

The important battle, on which depended the fate of Osweo and Ber- A. D. 655.  
 nitia, was fought in the month of December, at Loidis,\* near a river  
 called Winwed, which, at the time of the conflict, suddenly overflowed its  
 banks, and did considerable damage to the host of Penda; so that, what Penda slain, and  
 his army over-  
 come by Osweo.  
 with the desperate and irresistible bravery of the Bernitians, and the for-  
 tunate overflow of the waters, the huge host of Penda, which by report was  
 thirty times larger than the Northumbers, was overcome, and himself,  
 who so long had triumphed in his cruelties, slain in the field; with  
 Penda also fell Ethelheard, the brother of Anna, king of the East An-  
 gles; Ethelwald, the Deirian, escaped the fury of the fatal field, and re-  
 turned with the remains of his army to Deira, in the greatest disgrace.†

This wonderful victory raised the glory of Osweo to so high a pitch, that A. D. 658.  
 now elated with his ambition, he pursued his fortunes, and carried the war  
 into Mercia, which, by the sudden and unexpected death of Penda, was de- Osweo conquers  
 Mercia.  
 stitute of a chief capable of taking the rule upon him; so that by degrees  
 he subjugated the kingdom, and extended his conquests both to the  
 northern and southern parts of the whole island. He had received Peada,  
 the son of Penda, very kindly, and bestowed his daughter upon him in  
 marriage, on the condition of his becoming a Christian; and, by way of  
 dower, he gave him all the southern part of Mercia: but after the murder  
 of Peada, the chieftains of Mercia rebelled against Osweo, and ad-  
 vanced Wulfhere, the brother of Peada, to the throne, by whose prowess  
 Mercia was again recovered from foreign subjection.‡

When Osweo had reigned with great renown the space of twenty- A. D. 659.  
 eight years, he fell sick, and being struck with remorse for the murder  
 of Oswine, and the blood which he had spilt in his wars, he vowed a pil- The death of  
 Osweo.  
 grimage to Rome, where he purposed to have been buried, but death  
 prevented his designs. He departed this life the fifteenth of February,  
 in the year 670, aged fifty-eight years, and was buried in the church of  
 St. Peter, at Streanshalch.§

The wife of Osweo was Eanfled, the daughter of Edwine, who was the The wife and  
 issue of Osweo.  
 first Christian baptized in Northumberland; from her father's death, she  
 had lived with her mother, in Kent, until the time of her marriage.  
 After the decease of Osweo, (whom she survived several years) she spent  
 the remainder of her life in the monastery of Streanshalch, (her daughter  
 Elfleda being abbess there) where she died, and was buried in the church  
 of St. Peter, close by her husband. By this lady Osweo had issue, two  
 sons and one daughter; Egfrid, the eldest son, was born in the third  
 year of his father's reign, A. D. 645: this prince succeeded his father in  
 the government of Northumberland. Elfwin, the second son, was born in

\* Now Leeds, in Yorkshire. Vide Cam-  
 den, in Yorkshire.

† Bede, lib. iii. cap. 24.

‡ Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 21 & 24.

§ Bede, lib. iv. cap. 5

A. D. 669. the year 661, the ninth of his father's reign; he was slain in the eighteenth year of his age, in a battle fought by his brother against the Mercians, A. D. 679. Elfleda, the daughter, was born in September, A. D. 654, the twelfth year of her father's reign. Osweo, before the battle which he fought with Penda, vowed to God, that if he would grant him the victory, his infant daughter should be consecrated to the divine duties, and kept in perpetual virginity. After the conquest, according to his promise, Elfleda was committed to the care of the renowned Hilda, abbess of Streanshalch, where she lived a nun, and succeeded Hilda as the abbess. She died in the year 714, the sixtieth of her own age, and was buried in the church within the said monastery.

The natural issue of Osweo.

Osweo had also two natural children; Alcfrid, a son, who after the death of his brother Egfrid, succeeded in the government of all Northumberland;\* and Alkfreda, a daughter, who was born before her father was king, in the year of our Lord 653. She was after married to Peada, the son of Penda, the famous monarch of the Mercians.

### EGFRID, the sixth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 670. IN the early part of his life, and at the time which Osweo, his father, fought with Penda the last decisive battle, Egfrid was in Mercia, held as an hostage by Kinfwith, the queen of that dominion; but being released by the conquering arms of his father, he returned to Northumberland, and in the twenty-fifth year of his age ascended the throne, holding under his dominion both Bernitia and Deira. He was a man ambitious of power, and of an unquiet disposition, which sometimes hurried him on to rash undertakings, and ended at last in the loss of his life.

The character of Egfrid.

A. D. 679. His first wars of consequence were against Ethelred, the king of the Mercians, which broke out in the ninth year of his reign; and upon the borders of the Trent was fought a great battle between them, in which was slain, Elfwine, the brother of Egfrid, a young man of an amiable disposition; his loss was equally lamented by both the kings, for he was much esteemed by Ethelred, and had married Ostrida, his sister. It is

Egfrid makes war with Ethelred, king of Mercia.

\* Bede says, that the reign of Osweo was troubled by the rebellion of his son Alcfrid: yet the particulars of this rebellion, or the time when it happened, are not set forth; perhaps, indeed, he might have taken part with Ethelwald, and been assistant in placing him on the throne of Deira: and some have positively affirmed, that on the death of Ethelwald, Alcfrid succeeded him in Deira, and that by the last will of Ethelwald. But so much are we in the dark relative to this affair, that

it would be folly to pretend to assert all these matters as facts. At the battle against the Mercians, in which was Ethelwald, Alcfrid assisted his father; and Bede expressly declares, that at the death of Egfrid, he had been some time in Ireland, where he had made great progress in religious learning. Why, or when, had he relinquished the crown of Deira, if he had ever been in possession of it, before his brother's death?

hard

hard to say which party had the victory in this battle; but some time after A. D. 679. afterwards, we find a reconciliation took place between Ethelred and Egfrid, at the earnest persuasion of Theodore, the bishop.\*

A considerable time was now spent in peace, which proved at last so distasteful to the disposition of Egfrid, that he was determined by some means or other to keep his subjects in action: wherefore, he sent a chieftain, named Berte, against the Irish, who had always been friends with the English, and were a very harmless, inoffensive people. When he arrived there, he fought against them, and they were easily overcome; yet did he cruelly make a prodigious slaughter amongst them, whilst they, unable to resist the fury of his arms, were driven to distress and wretchedness; from all sides they fled before him, praying fervently to Heaven for vengeance.†

Berte destroys the Irish.

The year after the invasion of Ireland, Egfrid, contrary to the advice of his chieftains, and the earnest persuasion of Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, commenced a war against the Picts, who bordered upon Northumberland, and over rashly pursuing them when they made a feint retreat, he was by degrees led into a narrow place amongst the mountains, where a strong ambush was appointed, so that he was hemmed in by the forces of his enemies, and slain on the spot. This accident happened in the month of June, 685, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His body was afterwards buried in St. Columb's island.‡

Egfrid is slain by the Picts.

Egfrid left no issue behind him; for his wife, who was named Etheldreda, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, refused to accompany with her husband, or partake of his bed: and it is yet more extraordinary, that Egfrid was her second husband, for she had been before married to a nobleman, named Tonberct, governor of the fenny countries of Norfolk, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, and Cambridgehire, during all whose life she remained a pure virgin; nor could any persuasion or intreaty, either with one husband or the other, prevail upon her to alter her mind. She was married to Egfrid twelve years; but after a time, when the king found that she would not yield to his allurements, he permitted her to leave him, and retire to the abbey of Coddington, where she was a veiled nun, under Ebba, the abbess; and afterwards, departing from thence, she went to Ely, and built St. Peter's church, and herself became abbess there, where she died, and was buried. This extraordinary and enthusiastic notion of virtue in Etheldreda, caused her afterwards to be canonized as a saint, and her memory was held in the greatest reverence.§

The extraordinary character of Etheldreda.

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 21.

† Ibid.

‡ Bede, lib. iv. cap. 26.

§ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 19.

**EALDFERTH, or ALCFRID, the seventh KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.**

A. D. 686. EALDFERTH, the natural son of Ofweo, succeeded his half-brother, Egfrid, in all his dignities. This prince, during the whole reign of his brother, (either through constraint or inclination) took up his residence in Ireland; but was speedily recalled from thence at his decease, to take the government of the kingdom upon him. He was a learned man, and particularly well versed in the scriptures; and though the bounds of his dominions were not so large as those which some of his progenitors had possessed, yet he ruled all which he held, with such wisdom and discretion, that he justly acquired the esteem of his subjects.\*

His fortunate wars.

The unfortunate undertaking of Egfrid, his predecessor, had opened a passage to the Scots, Picts, and Britons into Northumberland, and gave them occasion to recover great part of their country, which had been subdued by the Northumbrian kings. These people Ealdforth kept under; and though he could not reconquer all those provinces which had been lost, yet a considerable part of them were through his prowess and activity redeemed again. In these wars he lost a valiant chieftain, named Berctred, who was slain by the Picts in the year of our Lord 698.†

His wife and issue, &c.

Ealdforth reigned upwards of nineteen years, and died in the year 705, leaving behind him one son, who succeeded him in the kingdom. The wife of Ealdforth was Kenburg, the daughter of Penda, king of Mercia, who was married to him some time before he was king, but we do not find that he had any other children than Osred, the son just mentioned.‡

**OSRED, the eighth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.**

A. D. 705. OSRED, the only son of Ealdforth, succeeded him in the realm, although he was then a child of only eight years of age. But instead of walking prudently in the steps of his father, and endeavouring by moderation and justice to secure the love of his subjects, as soon as he was able to judge for himself, he neglected all the essential duties of a good king, following the impulse of his own wicked inclinations; and for the gratification of his lust, spared not to violate the chastity of the veiled nuns, and most zealous votaries of religion.§ It is true, he is said to have married Cuthburga, the sister of Ina, king of the West Saxons; but with such pollutions did he abuse her bed, that she, in abhorrence of his continual adulteries, obtained a divorce, and departed from him, retiring to a nunnery which she had previously built at Winburne, in Dorsetshire.|| His wars were chiefly against the Scots and

Osred, a wicked prince.

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 26. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3.

† Bede, in epitome, &c.

‡ Chron. Sax. &c.

§ Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3.

|| Chron. Sax. sub anno 718.

Picts. In the seventh year of his reign, one of his captains, named A. D. 705. Berthfrid, fought with the Picts betwixt two places called Heve and Cere, where he obtained a considerable victory, and put a great number of the enemies to the sword.\*

After this prince had reigned eleven years, he was slain by two of his kinsmen, whose names were Cenred and Ofric: these men taking the advantage of the discontent which prevailed amongst the Northumbers, and knowing that the king had no lawful issue to succeed him in the government, perpetrated this murder to advance themselves in power.†

The death of Ofred.

#### CENRED, the ninth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

AFTER the death of his prince, Cenred, one of the conspirators, (a. A. D. 716. man of noble lineage, sprung from Ida) mounted the throne of Northumberland, but he did not long enjoy the fruits of his treason; for after a reign of only two years he deceased, leaving nothing behind him that was worthy of record.‡

The actions of Cenred not known.

#### OSRIC, the tenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

WHEN Cenred was departed this life, his colleague and fellow-traitor, A. D. 718. Ofric, the son of Alfrid, succeeded in the government. All the actions of his reign, which was thirteen years, like those of his predecessor, are buried in oblivion: only it appears, that at the end of this term, he was slain; but for what particular cause, or by whom, cannot at present be determined. We do not read of any wife or children left by this king, or his predecessor, so that after the death of Ofric, the crown was given to Ceolwulf.§

Ofric slain.

#### CEOLWULF, the eleventh KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

CEOLWULF, the next prince that swayed the scepter of Northumberland, A. D. 731. was descended from Oga, son of Ida, first king of Bernitia. This man was remarkable for his piety and singular zeal for religion; and his example was so prevalent, that the greater part of his subjects followed the virtuous example of their king, so that those days are set down as the most happy which the Northumbers enjoyed; when men laid aside their armour, and applied themselves to holy contemplation, seeming rather desirous of becoming professors of religious houses, than heroes in the field of battle.||

But as true goodness, and a proper warmth for the promotion of religion, are justly estimable; and ought, for the benefit and peace of a na-

\* Vide Hollinshed, vol. I. &c.

† Chron. Winton. Bromton says, "juxta mare pugnant belli infortunio est occisus."

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 716.

§ Ibid. sub anno 718. & Chron. Winton. &c.

|| Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 24. & Simon Dunelm. lib. I. cap. 13. & lib. II. cap. 1, &c.

A. D. 731. tion, to prevail in the minds of men; so ought a furious and inflated zeal to be avoided with equal care: the one is to the full as destructive as the other is beneficial; a striking instance of this truth we have now before us. The mistaken notion, which was of such disadvantage to the Northumbers, was this: that a man, to be truly religious, should quit all his mundane concerns, and seek the solitary cell; whereas, no doctrine can be more opposite to the purposes for which we are placed in the world, or the general benefit of mankind, which it is the duty of every individual to forward, as much as lies in his power, and not like an idle drone to live upon the labours of others, or secluded from those he ought to assist! But this absurd idea of religion caused many of the noble Northumbers to retire from their lands and possessions, and quit their offices in the state, in order to pursue a life of idleness and inactivity; by this means the kingdom was left without a proper defence, and lay open to the invasion of the enemy. This inviting opportunity was observed by Ethelbald, the proud Mercian king, and during the reign of Ceolwulf he entered the borders of Northumberland, where finding no parties considerable enough to oppose his march, he proceeded unmolested, and obtained great spoils, returning with his army triumphant back to Mercia.\* All these misfortunes could not open the eyes of this insatuated people; and the king himself, by far more blind than the rest, after he had reigned nearly eight years, gave up at once all pretensions to worldly honour, forsook his crown, and bid adieu to his kingly state; when retiring to the isle of Lindisfarne, he took up the cowl, as a more worthy ornament, and there ended his life.† He left neither wife nor children behind him, but bequeathed his crown to his cousin-german.

The zeal for religion which prevailed in Northumberland.

#### EGBERT, the twelfth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 738. EGBERT, the son of Eata, and cousin-german to Ceolwulf, after his departure, mounted the throne of Northumberland. When he first entered the kingdom, he found the boisterous neighbours, who bordered upon his realm, beginning to raise commotions amongst themselves, and several of them asserting a state of independence. These alarms obliged him to take the field, and the earlier part of his reign was spent in a continual succession of wars and disturbance; particularly the Picts and Britons were the most troublesome and dangerous.

Commotions in the state of Northumberland.

A. D. 740. Whilst he was busied in subduing the Picts and Britons, Ethelbald, the Mercian, (who had in the preceding reign obtained great spoils in Northumberland) taking the advantage of the absence of Egbert, came again to this kingdom, and renewed his former outrages. The people

Ethelbald again invades Northumberland.

\* Vide Chron. J. Brompton.

† Bede, lib. v. cap. 24. Malmf. lib i. cap. 3. &c.

notable to resist his powerful arms, were forced to submit themselves to A. D. 740. his will, and suffer their possessions to be plundered and destroyed, according to the pleasure of the conquerors, who, regardless of all faith or honour, used their advantage with great cruelty.\*

When Egbert had in great measure quieted the disturbances that alarmed the beginning of his government, like his predecessor, infected with the enthusiasm of the times, he gave up by degrees the management of worldly matters, and after a reign of twenty-one years, quitted his throne and state, retiring with great contentment to the more quiet scenes of a monastic life, where assuming the cowl, he also became a monk. He left behind him one only son, who succeeded him in the kingdom.†

Egbert quits his crown, and becomes a monk.

### OSWULF, the thirteenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 759.

AFTER the abdication of Egbert, Oswulf, his son, was advanced to the throne. Of this unfortunate prince we find but little recorded. It appears, that before he had quite completed one year of his reign, he was slain in a treacherous manner by his own servants, at Mikilwoughton; but for what cause is uncertain.‡

Oswulf slain by treason.

### EDILWALD, or MOLLO, the fourteenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 759.

AFTER the unfortunate murder of Oswulf, Edilwald, a nobleman, obtained the government of the kingdom. The beginning of his reign was troubled by a dangerous rebellion; for one Osfin, a nobleman of Northumberland, took up arms against him. This insurrection called him to the field, and at a place named Edwine's clive, a pitched battle was fought, which proved favourable to Mollo; for the rebellious earl was slain in the field, and all his army routed. After this success, the king enjoyed his dominions in peace. When he had reigned ten years, he was slain by the treason of Alured, who, impatient to gain the kingdom to himself, perpetrated this villainous murder.§ This prince left behind him one son, named Ethelred, who was kept from the throne by the traitor Alured; but after his expulsion, Ethelred was advanced to the kingdom by the voice of the people.

Edilwald; his reign and death.

### ALURED, the fifteenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.

A. D. 770.

ALURED, the chief conspirator against Edilwald Mollo, was descended from Alric, the natural son of Ida, first king amongst the Northumbers;

Alured succeeds in the kingdom.

\* Bede, in epitome.

† Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3. S. Dunelm. Hist. Eccles. Dunelm. lib. ii. cap. 3. Redbourne says, only nineteen years.

‡ Simon Dunelm. Hen. Hunt. & J. Redbourne.

§ Malmf. ut sup. J. Redbourne. Hunt. &c. Simon Dunelm seems to say, that he was not slain, but resigned the government; but whether by force, or his own free-will, does not appear.



A. D. 770. and after the death of Mollo he assumed the royal dignity. The actions of this prince are not known; but however, it may seem likely, that they were by no means worthy of record, or, at least, not pleasing to his subjects; by whom he was driven from the throne, after he had possessed it near ten years.\*

ETHELRED, *the sixteenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.*

A. D. 779. WHEN Alured was expelled from the government by the people, Ethelred, the son of Edilwald Mollo, was chosen to succeed him; but this his advancement, either because it was not by the full consent of the community in general, which might make him odious to those who had other views than his welfare; or else because his behaviour as a king was harsh and displeasing to some of his electors: for, early in his reign, we find rebellions breaking out, which soon became more general, and productive of evil consequences.

Ethelred set up  
in the kingdom.

After he had reigned near four years, two noblemen, named Edalbald and Herebert; headed a prodigious number of the mal-contented, and broke out into open rebellion: against these, the general of Ethelred's forces, named Aldulfe, marched out. A bloody conflict ensued between him and the insurgents; but ill fortune pursuing the general, his troops were overthrown, and he himself slain in the field: this battle was fought at Kingsclif. The hopes of the rebels being elevated by this fortunate beginning, they pursued their march with great alacrity, and at a place called Holythorn, fought a second battle with the forces of Ethelred, under the conduct of two valiant chiefs, named Kinwulf and Egga, which, after great slaughter, ended, like the former, in the total overthrow of the king's troops, and the death of the two leaders. These fatal blows coming so suddenly on the back of each other, depressed the courage of Ethelred, and extinguished all his hopes of success; on the other hand, the minds of the people were greatly agitated; different factions and parties disturbing the state. Whilst things were in this confusion, Ethelred left his crown, and got him privately out of Northumberland, where he plainly saw he could not abide any longer in safety.†

ALFWOLD, *the seventeenth KING of NORTHUMBERLAND.*

A. D. 782. THE flight of Ethelred completed the conquests of the two rebellious dukes, who presently after set up Alfwold, the brother of Alured: and so much was the kingdom weakened by the foregoing civil discords, that nonewere able or willing to oppose these riotous measures; therefore, Alfwold mounted the throne, and held the reins of government with an equal hand. Yet neither the mild disposition of their prince, nor his

The virtuous  
government of  
Alfwold.

\* Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3.

† Ibid. Chron. Simon Dunelm. Hæ. Hunt. Hoveden, &c.

virtue and justice, could prevail on the turbulent Northumbers quietly A. D. 782. to sit down, and enjoy the blessings of peace under a just and equitable administration: parties were prevailing in every district, and alarming disturbances arising from every quarter. When this worthy prince had weathered through a troublesome reign of near ten years, the civil dissensions broke out afresh, and in a violent commotion of the state, he was treacherously slain by the conspiracy of a chief of the mal-contented, named Siga, in the month of October, the year of our Lord, 791, at a place called Scythle cestre, and his body was buried at Haugustald. He left behind him two sons, Celf and Celfwin, who were both of them slain by Ethelred.\*

OSRED, *the eighteenth King of Northumberland.*

AFTER the murder of Alfwold, the prevailing party set up Ofred, A. D. 791. his nephew, the son of abdicated Alured. He enjoyed his royal dignities but a very little time; for by the same capricious multitude, through whose power he had been advanced to the throne, in less than a year he was again pulled down: so that quitting all his honours, together with his country, he fled away, and sought for safety in a foreign realm.†

ETHELRED *again restored to the Kingdom.*

AFTER the expulsion of Ofred, Ethelred, who had been absent from A. D. 792. Northumberland ten years, returned again, and by the favour of some parties, who were yet his friends, he once more mounted the throne. When he had re-assumed the reins of government, he remembered the injuries which were formerly done him by many of the nobles; these he now revenged, and the chief of those who had been instrumental in his expulsion he put to death. To render his crown still more secure, by intrigues and fallacious promises he drew the sons of Alfwold from their asylum, the cathedral church of York, and caused them to be slain at a place called Wanwaldremere. Not yet content, his next step was to ensnare the unfortunate Ofred, who had been so lately driven from the throne of Northumberland. Deceived by the splendid offers of Ethelred, in an evil hour, Ofred left his retreat, and trusted himself to the faithless promise of a faithless man, who had no sooner enticed him to enter the kingdom, than he caused him to be instantly put to death, at a place called Cunburge. Now thinking himself seated firmly on the throne, he put away his wife without the least offence on her side, merely to strengthen his party by a powerful alliance; and he married Elfled, the second daughter of Offa, the glorious Mercian king. But how vain this his boasted policy and craft! for, in the midst of all his power and security, he was tumbled from his throne, ending his life in a miserable manner. All

\* Chron. Simon Dunelm. Hen. Hunt. † Ibid. & Chron. J. Redbourne, Hoveden, &c.

- A. D. 792. these cruel and unjust actions which he had committed were so highly displeasing to his subjects in general, that continual murmurings filled the state; but regardless of this, he continued his tyrannies, till even his friends and partizans were disgusted: so that in one universal clamour, his own servants rose against him, and at Corbre he was slain, the 18th of April 795, when he had reigned near four years after his return to the kingdom.\*

*The Decline of the Kingdom of Northumberland.*

The decline of Northumberland.

BUT now began the glory of the kingdom of Northumberland to fade away, and all those who from this time assumed the title of kings, were chiefly tyrants and usurpers, whose rule was upheld by the prevalence of parties; for, rent and torn into various factions, new opinions were daily broached, and constant disturbances harassed the state.

- A. D. 796. Soon after the murder of Ethelred, the inconstant multitude set up one Oswald in the kingdom; but scarcely had he grasped the reins of government, when changing their minds, he was driven from the throne, after he had ruled only eight and twenty days.†

Oswald's short reign.

Eardulf, his troublesome reign.

When Oswald departed the kingdom, a nobleman, named Eardulf, assumed the royal dignity, and held it some time amidst the constant troubles and commotions which prevailed in the realm. Early in his reign, a nobleman, named Wadda, who was one of the principal conspirators against Ethelred, (wanting, perhaps, to advance his own power) made war upon Eardulf, and fought a battle with him at Billinghameth, near Walalege, where great slaughter was made on either side; but in the end the conquest remained with Eardulf, and Wadda, with his army, was driven from the field. Various battles and commotions followed this, with success as various; all of which are set down in such confusion by the ancient authors, that it will be impossible to make out a clear and distinct history. Eardulf, however, having made himself odious by the murder of Alchmund, the son of Alured, and brother of Ofred, joined with other unpopular actions, was driven from his throne, not long after he had fought a fierce battle with Cenulph, king of Mercia.‡

- A. D. 826. For some time after the expulsion of Eardulf, we have no certain account of Northumberland; but it is most likely, that, different parties prevailing, different rulers were suddenly set up in the kingdom, and as suddenly pulled down again, either through the changeableness of their electors' dispositions, or the decline of their strength. In this truly lamentable state, the whole kingdom seems to have been involved when Egbert, the powerful king of the West Saxons, having conquered Mercia, brought his army into Northumberland, where he found the peo-

Egbert overcomes the Northumbrians.

\* Ibid. *ibid.* ut sup.  
† Simon Dunelm. *Gest. reg. Ang.*

‡ Ibid. *Chron. J. Redbourne.*

ple divided amongst themselves, and the whole nation\* in a ruined A. D. 826, condition; so that, without much difficulty, he presently subdued their forces, and brought them under subjection.

From this time the kingdom of Northumberland owed obedience to the West Saxon kings, and was held as tributary to that state, until, by the conquest of the Danes, it was over-run, and the way opened to those cruel invaders, which they pursued to the ruin of all England. What yet remains of the history of this kingdom, as well as its total subversion by the Danes, will follow hereafter in the succeeding part.

The history of Northumberland ended for the present.

\* S. Dunelm, &c. &c.

THE  
E A S T A N G L E S;  
THE SIXTH KINGDOM OF THE  
H E P T A R C H Y.

The extent of  
the kingdom of  
the East Angles.

THE next kingdom of the Saxons established in Britain, was that of the East Angles; which contained the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and the isle of Ely. On the north and the east it was bounded by the sea; on the west by St. Edmund's Dyke, and part of Hertfordshire; and on the south by Essex.

UFFA, *the first KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

A. D. 575. UFFA, a noble German, descended from Woden, about the year 575, arrived in Britain with a strong party of Saxon troops, and landed upon the borders of Norfolk. By degrees he drove the Britons from their possessions in those parts, and with his followers settled there in their stead; at which time he assumed the title of king. His military acts, as well as his civil ordinances, are not handed down to posterity; yet we may suppose he was successful in both, for so much was he honoured by his subjects, that long after his death the succeeding kings of the East Angles were surnamed Uffings,\* as a token of respect due to the memory of their deceased chief. His reign is said to have been seven years, when he died, and left the kingdom to his only son.

Uffa conquers  
Norfolk, and  
assumes the title  
of king.

TITULUS, *the second KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

A. D. 582. WE have no traces left of the government and military actions of this prince: for so much have the historians been taken up with the reign of Redwald, who succeeded in the kingdom, that Titulus and his father could obtain no share in the records. The reign of Titulus appears to have been eleven years, or thereabouts, and he was succeeded in the kingdom by Redwald, his son.†

Reason why the  
reigns of these  
two kings are  
passed over so  
hastily.

A. D. 593. REDWALD, *the third KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

Redwald, the  
greatest mo-  
narch of the  
East Angles.

REDWALD, the most potent king of the East Angles, mounted the throne upon the death of his father: he had been substituted chief under

\* Uffa a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum, Uffingus appellant. Bede, Ecc. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 15.

† Huntingdon, lib. ii. Bromton. Mat. West. &c.

Ethelbert, king of Kent, and ruled as viceroy in all his territories. In A. D. 593. this capacity he acquired the highest pitch of honour and renown. To this prince did Edwine, the great king of Northumberland, owe his advancement; for he not only protected him from the pursuits of Ethelfrith, his brother-in-law, but with his own army overthrew the Northumbrian powers, and placed Edwine upon the throne, Ethelfrith, the late king, being slain in the conflict: but in this battle, which was fought close upon the banks of the river Idle, Redwald, to his great grief, lost his eldest son, named Regenhere. When Redwald had thus advanced the glory of his friend, he returned back to his own kingdom. Edwine was no sooner converted to Christianity, than he persuaded Redwald also to be baptized, though to but little purpose; for, not being stedfast in his new faith, the intreaties of his wife prevailed upon him to forsake the same, and return again to the worship of his idol deities.\* Redwald enjoyed his kingdom but a short time after his apostacy; for when he had reigned about thirty-six years, he deceased, leaving the kingdom to his younger son.

The name of his wife is not recorded; but she is said to have been the wife of a nobleman, descended of the royal blood of the Saxons. The wife and issue of Redwald. She was an enemy to the Christian religion, and the chief cause which prevented its earlier propagation in the kingdom of the East Angles; excepting this, she was possessed of many virtuous qualities: for it was entirely through her persuasion that Redwald refused to deliver the fugitive Edwine to the ambassadors of Ethelfrith, which he himself at first had resolved to do. This lady had a son, named Sigebert, by her first husband; and by Redwald, two sons, Regenhere and Eorwald; the former was slain in the battle against Ethelfrith, and the latter succeeded his father in the realm.†

#### EORPWALD, *the fourth King of the East Angles,*

THIS prince appears to have been of a meek and gentle disposition; A. D. 629. and though it is true he bore the title of a king, yet it was the title only; for, after the death of Redwald, the influence of aspiring Edwine was such, that he may much more justly be stiled the ruler of the kingdom. At the earnest persuasion of the Northumbrian monarch, Eorwald was baptized, in the year of our Lord 632, and was the first king of this province that openly professed the Christian faith; but his subjects, displeased with him before, because of his meek deportment, were now enraged to the greatest degree; for he had not only professed himself to be a Christian, but caused the same doctrine to be preached, and received by the chief of his people. The sudden change in their religion was highly offensive, inasmuch that they conspired against him, and determined by his death to put a stop to these distasteful proceed-

\* Bede, lib. ii. cap. 15. & Malmf. lib. i. cap. 5, &c.

- A. D. 629. ings; and not long after, this worthy prince was slain by a traiterous Pagan, named Richbart, when he had reigned six years, or thereabouts. He left no wife or issue behind him, therefore he was succeeded in the kingdom by his half-brother, Sigebert.\*

SIGEBERT, *the fifth King of the East Angles.*

- A. D. 635. SIGEBERT was the son of Redwald's wife by a former husband, whose name is unknown. Redwald, after his marriage, looked upon Sigebert with a jealous eye, and suspected that he was secretly aspiring to the crown; the chief motive of this suspicion, was the great love which the people in general bore towards him. Vain were the endeavours of Sigebert, (who asserted his innocence with great constancy) to drive these painful thoughts from the mind of Redwald; all his arguments appeared but as specious coverings to his unlawful designs, and served rather to inflame, than extinguish the king's mistrust. When the unfortunate Sigebert saw that it was impossible for him to convince his father-in-law of the purity of his intentions, he prudently left the court, and retiring from the kingdom of the East Angles, went over into France, and remained there during the whole reign of Redwald, and his son, Eorpwald.†

Sigebert wrong-fully suspected by Redwald.

After the death of his half-brother, he returned again to his native country, and was presently chosen by the people, by whom he was dearly beloved, to succeed the murdered son of Redwald in the throne. As soon as he had begun his reign, he declared his zeal for the Christian religion, and earnestly exhorted his subjects to embrace the same: such was the effects of his arguments, and the preaching of the religious men, that the people, who had before been so inveterate against the doctrine of the gospel, listened with great humility to their teachers, and with one consent received the true faith.‡

- A. D. 640. Thus far Sigebert acted like a worthy king, and the true father of his people. The better to secure their minds in the love of Christianity, he caused proper places of instruction to be erected, and the new-taught religion began greatly to flourish in the kingdom. Now was the time for Sigebert to have completed his duty, by keeping the kingdom in a posture of defence, lest any designing power should come suddenly upon them, and not only interrupt their religious studies, but even subvert the whole government. Yet, led from this noble pursuit, he followed the impulse of enthusiastic fury, and left his people, to their great grief, like sheep without a shepherd, whilst he himself retired to a monastery, and sought an inglorious solitude. Soon after, he appointed Egric, his

Sigebert leaves his crown, and retires to a monastery.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 3 & 5. Chrou. Sax. sub anno 642, &c.

† Malmf. lib. i. cap. 5.  
‡ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18, &c.

cousin, to hold the government in his stead. Sigebert left his crown A. D. 640. when he had ruled about five years.\*

*EGRIC, the sixth KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

EGRIC ruled near three years in peace, when Penda, the Mercian A. D. 641. king, made war upon the East Angles; and Egric not being able to oppose his furious march, the people ran to the monastery where Sigebert had retired, and brought him from thence, causing him (against his will) to take the command of the army upon him; but he would not by any means be prevailed upon to put on his armour, or take any offensive weapon in his hand, but holding a slender rod, he gave the command. The East Angles lost the day, as may reasonably be expected; what chance had they for victory, when their chief himself refused to lead them to the battle with that bravery and courage necessary to confound the enemy, and secure the conquest? The inactivity of a chief is doubly mischievous; for whilst on the one hand it damps the spirits of his soldiers, on the other it gives the nimble foe frequent occasions of distressing them. Sigebert himself was slain in the field, and with him fell Egric, his cousin, who held the government for him.† This unfortunate action happened about the year 643. Sigebert, as well as his substitute, Egric, died without issue, so that the kingdom fell to Anna, the next in blood to Eorpwald.

Sigebert and Egric slain in battle.

*ANNA, the seventh KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

ANNA, the son of Eric, the brother of Redwald, was the next who A. D. 643. mounted the throne of the East Angles. Like his predecessor, Sigebert, he was a just and devout man, and like him unfortunate; not, indeed, because he neglected the government of his people, for he seems to have held his rule with the greatest care and prudence. He gave reception to Cenwalh, king of Wessex, who was driven from his kingdom by the cruel Mercian, Penda, in revenge of his sister, that Cenwalh had put away. Nor did Anna cease, till, by his constant persuasion, Cenwalh received the Christian faith, and was baptized; after which, by Anna's assistance, he was again restored to the throne of Wessex. Some time after this, Penda again made war upon the kingdom of the East Angles: the cause, indeed, is unknown, (if there really was any other motive than Penda's irresistible ambition); however, he came against Anna with a mighty power, in the eleventh year of his reign, and in destructive marches assaulted the borders of the realm; when finding none there able to oppose him, he marched into the heart of the kingdom, and being joined by Æthelhere, the brother of Anna, in a fierce battle he over-

Anna a just and pious prince.

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18, &c.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 18. Malms. lib. i. cap. 5, &c.



A. D. 643. came the forces of Anna, and slew that unfortunate prince himself in the field. This battle was fought in the year 654.\*

The wife and  
issue of Anna.

Anna married Heriswida, the daughter of Herericus, the nephew of Edwin, king of Northumberland, by whom he had issue, two sons; Firmius, who was slain in the same battle with himself; and Erkenwald, abbot of Chertside, and bishop of London: also three daughters; Etheldreda, the eldest, was first married to Tonbert, governor of the fenny countries of Norfolk, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, and Cambridgeshire; after his decease, she was married to Egfrid, king of Northumberland; notwithstanding her marriages, she remained a pure virgin to the day of her death; she died at Ely, where she had been abbess, and was buried in St. Peter's church, the which herself had built.† Anna's second daughter, named Sexburga, was married to Ercombert, king of Kent, after whose death she took upon her the habit of a nun, and succeeded her sister as abbess of Ely, where she died, and was buried.‡ The third daughter was Ethilburga, made abbess of Barking, near London, by her brother Erkenwald, where she lived and died. Besides these, Anna had a natural daughter, whose name was Withburge, a professed nun, in the monastery of St. Brigges, in France.§

#### ÆTHELHERE *the eighth KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

A. D. 654. AFTER the death of Anna, his brother Æthelhere laid claim to the crown of the East Angles, and by the assistance of Penda (whose forces had over-run the kingdom) he mounted the throne. This designing prince, ambitious of power, had in his brother's life-time manifested his aspiring genius; and the sooner to attain the height of his wishes, joined with Penda in the slaughter of his king and brother, and the destruction of his country. But Heaven would not long permit him to triumph in his wickedness; for, soon after, he became the principal instrument of his own ruin.

The aspiring ge-  
nius of Æthel-  
here.

A. D. 655. He conceived, but for what cause is unknown, a mortal hatred against Osweo, the king of Northumberland; and, by his subtle insinuations, prevailed upon Penda, the Mercian, to make war upon him, whilst he himself would be assistant with all his power. Penda, big with the glory of his many important conquests, approved the scheme, and accordingly joining both their armies together, they entered Northumberland, and pursued the war with unrelenting rigour. Osweo driven to the greatest distress, and finding that by fair means he could in no wise appease the fury of his enemies, gave them battle. In this engagement all the forces of Penda and Æthelhere were routed, and they themselves slain in the field. This happened in the year 655, so that Æthelhere enjoyed his ill-got crown but one year, and barely that.||

Æthelhere slain  
in battle.

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18.

† Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 19.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 8.

|| Ibid. cap. 24.

The wife of Æthelhere was Herefwitha; she was sister to the famous Hilda, abbess of Streanshalch, and grandchild to Edwine, king of Northumberland. By this lady he had issue, three sons, Adulf, Elfwulf, and Beorn, who all of them succeeded his brother Ethelwald in the kingdom of the East Angles.

The wife and issue of Æthelhere.

ETHELWALD, *the ninth King of the East Angles.*

AFTER the slaughter of Æthelhere, his brother Ethelwald seized upon the government, and held it from the children of the late king the space of nine years; during all which time he seems not to have performed any action worthy of note.\* He is supposed to have left behind him one son, named Ethelred, who afterwards succeeded to the crown, and was the father of the unfortunate Æthelbyrhte.

The reign of Ethelwald not known.

ADULF, ELSWULF, and BEORN, *the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth Kings of the East Angles.*

WHEN Ethelwald, their uncle, departed this life, the three sons of Æthelhere took the government upon them, bearing rule jointly in the kingdom. Of these princes we have no records left, nor can we with certainty trace out the exact time of their particular deaths; however, it appears from succeeding circumstances, that they held the dominion amongst them the full space of fifty years. Some modern authors, indeed, have made them rule separately, and set down the particular time that each prince reigned; but as all this parade is mere matter of uncertainty, and especially as Malmesbury makes them all reign together, there is no substantial reason appears why they should be separated.†

The three sons of Æthelhere succeed in the realm.

ETHELRED, *the thirteenth King of the East Angles.*

THIS prince is supposed to have been the son of Ethelwald, which is, indeed, very uncertain. Though Ethelred appears to have reigned the full term of fifty-two years, all that we can collect concerning him is, in general, that he was a just man, and much beloved by his subjects.‡ His wife is called Laonorin; by her he had one son, (more famous than himself) named Ethelbyrhte, who reigned after him.

Uncertainties relative to Ethelred.

\* Malmf. lib. i. cap. 5.

† Thus Speed, with other moderns, have formally set down the extent of their reigns as follows: Adulf succeeds his uncle A. D. 664, and rules nineteen years; Elfwulf succeeds his brother, and reigns seven (Hollinghed, indeed, says twelve) years; and Beorn again succeeds Elfwulf,

and reigns twenty-six years, making together the term of fifty-two years; or, if you add the five years more, according to Hollinghed, given to Elfwulf, fifty-seven. But I have given my reasons above for making them reign together. Vide Malmf. lib. i. cap. 5.

‡ Ibid.

ETHEL-

*ETHELBYRHTE, the fourteenth KING of the EAST ANGLES.*

A. D. 767. In the same oblivion which envelopes the actions of the father, is buried those of the early part of the son's life, who succeeded him. We read, indeed, that he was a fine personable man, well learned for the times in which he lived, of an amiable temper, and inclined to no particular vice; on the contrary, his actions were all guided by the strictest justice and piety. Even this excellent character we owe, perhaps, to his unfortunate end, which made him lamentably conspicuous to the world in general.

The character  
of Ethelbyrhte.

A. D. 792. To make amends for what is wanting in the former part of Ethelbyrhte's reign, the monks and legend-writers have swelled their account of his death with fables and miracles, in order to honour his memory; which, together with his being fainted, has given him room enough in the monkish annals. But setting aside all the miraculous tales which are interwoven with the murder of Ethelbyrhte, we will (as briefly as possible) run over what appears as truth, and is well authenticated. Long had this excellent prince been importuned by his subjects to marry; but because, perhaps, he had not yet experienced the effects of love, he still delayed to comply with their wishes, as waiting till he should find a partner worthy of his affections: but overcome at last by the intreaties of his people, and the deluding offers which were made him by Offa, king of Mercia, of his daughter Elfrida, he accepted the proposal; and complying with the repeated invitations of Offa, went to the Mercian court, in order to consummate the marriage. But soon after his arrival, the ambitious Mercian (intending nothing less than the performance of his promise) caused him to be put to death, contrary to all humanity, the law of nature, and common hospitality. This being privately performed, the crafty king marched with his army into the kingdom of the East Angles, whilst the people, deprived of their sovereign, and not in the least suspecting the treachery of Offa, were unable to resist his forces; and in a little time the Mercians conquered the whole realm.\*

The burial  
of Ethelbyrhte.

The body of Ethelbyrhte was first privately buried, on the bank of the river Lugg, in Herefordshire, near the palace of Offa, at Sutton Wallis, where he was slain; but not long after, was taken up at the command of Offa, (who pretended to be struck with remorse for his crime) and honourably entombed at Hereford, where, over his remains, a spacious church was some time after built. Ethelbyrhte reigned twenty-five years over the East Angles, and was slain in the year of Christ 792.

*The DECLINE of the KINGDOM of the EAST ANGLES.*

Egbert conquers  
the kingdom of  
the East Angles.

AFTER the death of Ethelbyrhte, the kingdom fell to decay: for not only the Mercians, but the West Saxons, and those of Kent, oppressed

\* Malmf. *ibid.* Chron. J. Bromton. Simon Dunelin, &c. &c.

the

the people ; through this complication of misfortunes, it was destitute of proper rulers between fifty and sixty years. In this scene of confusion lay the affairs of this province, when Egbert, king of the West Saxons, entered the borders, and made the people tributary to him.

Some time after these troubles in the state, a pious man, named Offa, A. D. 855, was advanced to the throne of the East Angles ; and he was succeeded by Edmund, slaughtered by the Danes. From which period it continued under the government of the Danish powers, till Edward, the elder, drove them out, and annexed this dominion finally with his own. But as all these circumstances must naturally follow in the third part of the Chronicle, we shall here take our leave of this kingdom, which, from the death of Ethelbyrhte, was not considered as a separate or independent state.

The history of this kingdom broke off, and why.

MERCIA ;

## M E R C I A ;

## THE SEVENTH KINGDOM OF THE

## H E P T A R C H Y .

The extent of  
the kingdom of  
Mercia.

**T**HE seventh, and last, kingdom which the Saxons established in Britain, was Mercia; which was larger in circuit, and contained more counties, than any of the rest; as Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, Rutlandshire, Huntingdonshire, and part of Hertfordshire. This extensive dominion was bounded on the west by the river Dee, and the Severn; on the east by the sea, the East Angles, and the East Saxons; on the south by the Thames; and on the north by the Humber, and the Mersey. Mercia was at first divided into three parts, as East Mercia, Middle Mercia, and West Mercia.

CRIDA, *the first KING of MERCIA.*

A. D. 585. In the year of Christ 585, a noble Saxon chieftain, named Crida, (who, like the former kings of his country established in Britain, derived his pedigree from Woden) arrived in Britain, and, with his followers, over-run the middle part of the island without much difficulty; for the British power was considerably crushed and kept under by the powerful arms of those Saxon princes, who, long before this time, were settled in the surrounding provinces. Crida assumed the title of king, and from the time of his arrival held his dominions in peace. His reign was about eight years.\* He left one son, named Wibba, behind him, who succeeded to the throne of Mercia.

Crida first assumes the title of king, in Mercia.

WIBBA, *the second KING of MERCIA.*

A. D. 593. CRIDA being dead, Wibba took the government upon him; and after many successful engagements with the Britons, drove them from the borders of his kingdom, and greatly enlarged its extent. His reign appears to have been about three and twenty years,† but unfortunately his actions are negligently passed over, and nothing but the slight mention

The actions of Crida not known.

\* H. Hunt. lib. ii. Higden says, that he reigned ten years.

† Ibid. R. Higden says, twenty years.

of his British wars recorded: whilst even of them, there is left no particular account; either of the time when they happened, or the places where the battles were fought: but indeed, from this general gleam of light, as faint as it is, we may conclude him to have been a valiant prince, and deserving of a more important place in the annals of the heptarchy. He left behind him three sons; the eldest was Penda, the second Cenwalch, and the last Eoppa: and one daughter, named Sexburga, after married to Cenwalch, king of the West Saxons.

*CEORL, the third KING of MERCA.*

AFTER the decease of Wibba, his sons did neither of them succeed him in the kingdom; but Ceorl, his nephew, the son of his brother Kinemund, was advanced to the throne. Yet whether by the consent of the people, he was chosen in preference to the issue of Wibba, or whether he usurped the dignity by force; or fraud, cannot be determined: however, his reign appears to have been spent in profound tranquility, for the space of ten years, when he deceased, and left no issue behind him to succeed in the realm.\*

The reign of Ceorl not known.

*PENDA, the fourth KING of MERCA.*

No sooner was Ceorl departed from this life, than Penda, his cousin, the eldest son of Wibba, mounted the throne of Mercia. He was a man of a most turbulent disposition; fierce and valiant in the field, violent in his councils, cruel in his temper, and insatiate in his revenge. With war and destruction he shook the borders of the surrounding Saxon kingdoms, and spread an universal terror through the land. The chief cause of his wars seems to have proceeded from his own restless disposition, and the end proposed to himself no more than the cruel satisfaction of making others wretched; for, as those wars were madly begun, so were the several advantages which his powerful forces had gained, as imprudently relinquished.†

Character of Penda.

His first war was commenced against Cynegils and Cwichelm, his son, who ruled jointly in the kingdom of Wessex: with these he fought a great battle at Cirencester, which continued till both armies were parted by the approach of night. In this bloody conflict, so much slaughter was sustained on either side, that, in the morning, instead of renewing the fight, a parley ensued, and agreements of peace were made.‡

Penda makes war in Wessex.

Five years after this, he persuaded Cadwallo, a British king, to rebel against Edwine, king of Northumberland, whilst he himself with a

The slaughter of Edwine and his host.

\* H. Hunt. lib. iii. & Mat. West. Polly-chron. &c.

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† Bede, Malmf. Hunt. &c.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 628, & alia.

Y

mighty

A. D. 633. mighty force assisted him. These two armies joined together, fought against Edwine and his host at a place called Hethfield, where, after a sharp battle, Edwine was slain, and all his forces put to flight. This conquest gained, they entered the kingdom of Northumberland, and dreadfully wasted the country wherever they came. Penda now left Cadwallo to revenge his own cause, and returned to Mercia, where he continued some time in peace.\*

A. D. 642. Nine years after, the glory of Oswald, the pious king of Northumberland, (who, in defence of his country, had overthrown the army of Cadwallo, and reduced the Britons to subjection) became offensive to him; wherefore, to depress his rising fame, and revenge the cause of his ally, he re-entered the borders of Northumberland with a mighty host, and slew the unfortunate Oswald in the field.†

A. D. 643. The year after this bloody expedition in Northumberland, hurried on by the impetuosity of his temper, Penda went with his army into the kingdom of the East Angles, and made war upon Egric, their ruler. After he had wasted the country by his destructive marches, and slaughtered a great number of the distressed inhabitants, he was met by the forces of Egric, under his command, joined with Sigebert, the former king, (whom the people had forced from the monastery where he had retired, and placed at the head of the army.) Both these unfortunate princes were slain by Penda, and all their forces put to flight; so that he pursued his march throughout the country without the least opposition.‡

A. D. 645. Returning from the conquest of the East Angles, Penda sat down peaceably for two years, when he again took the field, with a greater shew of justice than he had formerly. Cenwalh, the king of the West Saxons, who had married Sexburga, his sister, without the least offence on her side, put her from his bed, and followed a dissolute life. Incensed at his sister's wrongs, and to revenge the oppressive cause, he entered the borders of Wessex with a powerful army, and drove Cenwalh from his throne. But being cruel in his conquests, the whole nation miserably suffered by his violence, for the fault of their wretched sovereign. Cenwalh, however, fled to the court of Anna, king of the East Angles, where he remained some time, and was afterwards re-instated in the throne of Wessex.§

A. D. 654. Now again Penda passed nine years in peace, at the end of which he resolved to re-enter the kingdom of the East Angles, and that (as it is generally thought) without the least provocation; unless he still remem-

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 20. & alia.

† Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 17.

‡ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18. & Malmf. lib. i. cap. 6.

§ Ib. cap. 17. & Chr. Sax. sub ann. 645. bered

bered the protection which Anna had formerly given to Cenwalh, when A. D. 654. he had driven him out of the kingdom of Wessex, and was determined for that offence to take revenge. However this may be, with a prodigious force he invaded that dominion; against whom the distressed Anna brought his army: but Fortune still favouring the attempts of Penda, the East Angles were overthrown, and Anna himself slain in the field of battle. After this conquest, he set Æthelhere, the brother of Anna, upon the throne, as a reward for the assistance which this wicked prince had given him against his brother, and his country.\*

Scarcely was Penda returned to Mercia, when the traitor, Æthelhere, A. D. 655. persuaded him to make war once more in Northumberland; for he set the rising fame of Osweo, who then ruled in that kingdom, in such a dangerous point of view, that, fired with jealousy, and fearful of a rival in glory, he followed the advice which was given him, and being joined by the army of Æthelhere, went into Northumberland, and began with great cruelty to destroy the country wherever he came. Osweo, on the other hand, was unwilling to meet his adversary in the field, and strove by large gifts and fair promises, to pacify his fury, but in vain; for the mind of Penda was bent on blood and destruction. When Osweo saw the unrelenting disposition of Penda, he resolved to abide the fortune of the field. And now the cruel tyrant had run his destined race! for, being over secure in the superior number of his host, (which is said to have been thirty times greater than the army of Osweo) and negligent in his arrangement of the battle, he lost the day, and fell himself in the fatal conflict; with him was also slain the traitor, Æthelhere, at whose instigation the war was first begun. This battle was fought upon the banks of the river Winwed, near Leeds,† which river burst its banks during the engagement, and suddenly overflowed great part of Penda's army; so that more men perished in the waters, than were slain with the swords of Osweo's soldiers. Thus ended the life of this furious prince, (who had caused the deaths of no less than five kings, by far more worthy than himself) after he had reigned almost thirty years.

The wife of Penda was named Kinwitha, and by her he had issue, five sons, and two daughters: his three eldest sons, Peada, Wulfere, and Ethelred, succeeded successively in the kingdom. Mercthel, the fourth son, was a man remarkable for his piety; and Merewald, the fifth, and last son, governed some part of Mercia under his brothers. The daughters of Penda, were Cineburga, the eldest, who was after married to Alcfrið, king of Northumberland, but leaving her husband, she became

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18. & Malmf. lib. i. cap. 6. Bromton.

† "Apud amnem Winwed unde exivit proverbium.

"In Winwed amne vindicate est cædes Anna.

"Cædes regum Sigeberti & Egrici.

"Cædes Oswaldi & Edwini." M. West. sub anno 655. & Henry Huntingdon, lib. ii.

Penda and his partner slain in Northumberland.

The wife and issue of Penda.



A. D. 655. a nun in Kingesburgh abbey: and Cineswitha, the youngest, was married to Offa, king of the East Saxons; and after his departure to Rome, became a nun in the same abbey with her sister.\*

PEADA, *the fifth* KING of MERCIA.

The conversion  
of Peada, and his  
marriage.

THIS prince was by his father, in his life-time, made governor over the Middle Saxons, a division of Mercia. He sought in marriage Alcfleda, the daughter of Ofweo, king of Northumberland; but received for answer, that, she being a Christian, it was contrary to the laws of her country for her to marry one who was a Heathen. Peada willing to obtain the virgin, listened with great attention to the doctrine of the gospel, which was carefully preached to him. Struck with the sacred truths, his heart inclined to Christianity, and his wavering resolutions were positively confirmed by the instructions and advice of Alcfred, (the natural son of Ofweo, who had married Cyneburga, the sister of Peada) so that he revoked his former errors, and resolved to be baptized; declaring at the same time, that this change arose from a full conviction of the truth, and excellency of the Christian religion, and not from the love which he bore to Alcfleda, for he would continue constant in his present resolutions whether he thereby obtained the virgin or not. Some little time after, he was baptized; and at the same time, the greater part of those people over whom he ruled received the Christian faith. The chief objections of Ofweo being thus removed, he gladly consented to the marriage of his daughter. All these proceedings of Peada were not opposed by Penda, his father, who, though he professed no love to the doctrine of Christianity, yet hindered not its promulgation in his dominions.†

A. D. 655. Now broke out the fatal war between Penda and Ofweo; and after the death of Penda, Ofweo entered the kingdom of Mercia, and brought it under subjection. However, he received Peada with great kindness, and made him king over all the middle division of the realm, which was conferred upon him by the conqueror, because he had married his daughter, and embraced the Christian faith; the rest he held in subjection under him. Peada no sooner mounted the throne, than he caused the idol temples to be destroyed throughout his dominions, and began by his own zeal and piety, to set an excellent example to his subjects. During the reign of Penda, their late victorious king, the Mercians had been so habituated to war and disturbance, that the peace which followed, under the quiet government of Peada, became irksome and tedious; and because they saw no prospect of freeing themselves from the yoke which Ofweo had imposed upon them, whilst Peada held the scepter, they began with murmurs to express their discontent; nor were they quieted, until, by his murder, way was made for Wulfhere, his brother, to ascend the throne. To add

The treacherous  
murder of Pea-  
da.

\* Ingulphus. Hist. fol. 1.

† Bede, lib. iii. cap. 21.

to the heinousness of this bloody act, his own wife is accused of having A. D. 655. a principal hand in his death.\* He was slain during the celebration of Easter, when he had reigned little better than two years, leaving no issue behind him.

### WULFHHERE, *the sixth King of MERCA.*

THE faction who were concerned in the murder of Peada, headed by A. D. 658. three chief nobles of the state, named Jumin, Ebba, and Eadbert, after his death, rebelled against Ofweo, and disclaimed all obedience to him, setting up Wulfhere, the brother of Peada, upon the throne. By the patriotic spirit of the chiefs, the resolution of the people, and the valiant efforts of their new king, the whole province was restored to its former liberty.†

Wulfhere was a stern, passionate man, eager in revenge, and valiant in the field. The impetuosity of his temper cannot be more strikingly delineated, than in the following extraordinary relation:—When he first mounted the throne of Mercia, he still retained the idolatrous superstition of his ancestors; and though he does not appear to have hindered the promulgation of the gospel amongst his subjects in general, yet he himself was far from being convinced of its sacred truths. One of his sons, named Wulfad, hunting in a forest, not far from his father's palace,‡ pursued a stag with great eagerness, and was separated from the rest of his company, when by accident he came to the cell of a religious priest, named Cedd, (who, during the reign of Peada, the late king, had been very assiduous in converting the Mercians to Christianity.) The young prince pleased with the appearance of sanctity and holiness which he discovered in Cedd, went up to him, and a very interesting conversation ensued; in which the priest set forth all the advantages that were to be found in the gospel dispensations, and particularly explained the expectations of a future judgment, and an eternal life. Struck to the very soul by the discourse of Cedd, Wulfad desired to be received into the number of Christ's flock, and was accordingly baptized by him in a fountain that ran hard by. After this, Wulfad related his adventure to Rufine, his brother; Rufine was easily persuaded to accompany Wulfad to the habitation of the holy man, where, being like his

*The Mercians rebel against Ofweo.*

*Wulfhere rashly murders his two sons.*

\* We ought here to take notice, (in favour of the lady) that Bede, whose authority is the best we have concerning this matter, does not positively declare that she had a hand in the murder; but only intimates, that it was so reported. He was slain (says Bede) in the celebration of Easter, "proditione (*ut dicunt*) conjugis sue." Bromton and others, who have followed Bede, have left out the words "*ut dicunt*," and so positively fixed the

slain upon the queen. However, there is some reason to suppose she might be innocent; especially, because Robert de Swapham, a very ancient author, expressly declares, that it was not his wife, but his mother, that betrayed him to death. Vide Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 24. Chron. John Bromton, & alia, & Hist. Eccles. de Medeshamsted, per Robertus de Swapham.

† Ibid. &c. ut supra.

‡ At Wulfercester, in Staffordshire.

A. D. 658. brother convinced of his errors, he abjured his former religion, and was also baptized by Cedd. Yet these proceedings of the young princes were not so secretly conducted, but they came to the knowledge of Werbodus, the king's chief counsellor; and he, with many artful aggravations, related the same to Wulfhere, and informed him, that he might himself be witness of their fault. This information incensed the king to the highest degree, and he presently determined to go to the cell, accompanied only with Werbodus, who had inflamed his mind with a thousand jealous fears. When he entered the habitation of the priest, he found his two sons making their humble supplications to God, and in the height of his fury he slew them both with his own hand. But some time after, being himself convinced of the truth and excellency of the religion which they had embraced, he renounced his former superstitions, and became a truly zealous Christian, repenting with unfeigned sorrow the murder of his sons. As for the bodies of the two unhappy princes, their mother, Ermenhild, caused them to be buried in a sepulchre of stone,\* over which, in after times, she built a stately church.†

A. D. 661. Three years after Wulfhere had ruled in Mercia, he made war upon the West Saxons, and in a sharp battle fought against Cenwalh, at Poffenteburg, he overcame his forces, pursuing his conquests to Efscedune, and from thence through the whole kingdom of Wesscx, to the isle of Wight, which he invaded, and subdued. This island he gave to Edlewalch, king of the South Saxons, who, at his persuasion, renounced his idolatry, and was baptized, Wulfhere himself being his sponsor at the font.

A. D. 675. After these disturbances, Mercia, which had so long been warring against her neighbours, or at variance within her own limits, enjoyed no less than thirteen years of tranquility; during which time, Wulfhere zealously endeavoured to advance the Christian religion in Mercia, and secure the peace of the kingdom. In the beginning of the fourteenth year, he entered the kingdom of Wesscx the second time, (but for what cause is unknown) and fought with Efcwine a bloody battle, at a place called Bidanheafod, where, after much slaughter, the victory remained doubtful.‡

The death, wife, and issue of Wulfhere.

This engagement seems to have put a final stop to the marches of Wulfhere into Wesscx; for shortly after, he departed this life, being then in Mercia, over which he had ruled seventeen years. His wife was Ermenhild, daughter of Ercombert, king of Kent. She survived her

\* Regist. Obbat. Peterb. per Walter de Wittelcy.

† "This place was after called *Stones*, or *Stonar*, by reason (says Stow) of the stones which the multitude brought thi-

ther for the building of the church, when they came to frequent the place." Vide Stow's Chronicle, & Camden in Staffordshire, &c.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub anno 675, &c.

husband,

husband, and after his death retired to the monastery of Ely, where her A. D. 675. mother, Sexburga, was then abbess, and spent the remainder of her life in pious solitude: she died, and was buried, in the self-same monastery.\* By this lady, Wulfhere had issue, three sons; Cenred, the elder, who following religious studies, did not immediately succeed his father in the government, but at the death of his uncle, Ethelred, was made king. Wulfad and Rufine, the other two sons of Wulfhere, were slain by himself, as is above related. He had also one daughter, named Wereburga, who was committed to the tuition of the pious virgin, Etheldreda, her mother's aunt, the abbess of Ely, and by her persuasion took the veil upon her. In the reign of Ethelred, her uncle, she returned to Mercia, and was by him made governess of all the monasteries and religious houses in his dominion. She died at Trickingham,† and was first buried at Hanbury, though afterwards her bones were removed to Chester, where a stately church, in honour of her, was built by Leofric, earl of Cheshire.‡

### ETHELRED, *the seventh KING of MERCIA.*

ETHELRED, the third son of Penda, after the decease of his brother A. D. 675. Wulfhere, took upon him the government of Mercia, whilst young Cenred, his nephew, contented himself with a private and studious life, never once attempting to disturb the quiet of his uncle's reign, in the as-  
Ethelred mounts the throne of Mercia.  
 sertion of his own right and heritage.

Ethelred was a man of a fierce and violent disposition, ambitious of A. D. 676. power, and valiant in the field. Soon after he ascended the throne, he invaded Kent with a mighty power, and with fire and sword destroyed the country wherever he came; in his rash fury sparing no place, how-  
Ethelred cruelly invades the kingdom of Kent.  
 ever sacred or respectable, so that even churches and monasteries sunk in the general ruin. All this time, the distressed Lothaire, who then ruled in Kent, fearing the power of his cruel foe, did not dare to take the field against him, or endeavour by force of arms to stop his destructive progress. Ethelred, on the other hand, finding none to oppose him, marched up to the city of Rochester, and after pillaging the miserable citizens of all their wealth, set fire to the city itself, and burnt it to the ground. Content with their conquests, and loaden with spoils, the triumphant Mercians shortly after left the borders of Kent, and returned home.§

Ethelred now sat himself down in peace for the space of three A. D. 679. years, after which he began another important war, and invaded

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist.

† Vita S. Werburgæ, MS. in bib. Cotton.

‡ Now called Trenttham, in Staffordshire.

ton. infig. Caligula, A. viii.

§ Chron. Sax. sub anno 676, &c.

A. D. 679. the borders of Northumberland. But here he obtained not a passage so easy as he had found in Kent; for Egfrid, who ruled in that kingdom, met him with his army near the Trent, and gave him battle. Ethelred makes war in Northumberland. After a fierce and bloody engagement, the conflict was ended, but with great, though nearly, equal loss on either side; so that the victory still remained doubtful. We do not find that they renewed the engagement, but sometime after they entered reciprocally into agreements of peace, and were thoroughly reconciled to each other.\*

A. D. 697. After this unsuccessful expedition, Ethelred remained peaceable at home for a considerable time, when a very fatal accident troubled his domestic peace, which was no less than the murder of Ostrid, his queen, who was slain by the noblemen of Mercia, as she passed through the northern parts of the kingdom.† This remarkable event is unluckily passed over in such haste by the author who records it, that the reason of this violent outrage, as well as the manner of her death, is not at this distance of time to be discovered. No doubt, a matter of such alarming consequence must have greatly affected the king; and it is likely he might revenge her death, and severely chastise the unbridled temerity of the seditious lords.

A. D. 704. Ethelred at last was struck with a sudden remorse of conscience, and began in a religious light to reflect on the injustice of his former conquests. The blood which he had spilt to satisfy his ambition, was now called to remembrance; the recollection of those sacred places which he had polluted, and wantonly destroyed, awaked in his mind the horrors of guilt, and shook his soul with the awful fears of divine vengeance. In expiation of his cruel deeds, he first caused the monastery of Bradney, in Lincolnshire, to be built; but after, thinking this was not sufficient to atone for his former faults, he determined to forsake his worldly pomp, and in the cloistered cell, by prayer and meditation, complete the purgation of his affrighted soul. Accordingly, he first bequeathed his crown to his nephew, Cenred, to whom it by right belonged; and then bidding adieu to the world at once, retired to the monastery at Bradney, which he had lately built, after he had reigned over the Mercians full nine and twenty years. In the same monastery he was made abbot, and lived in his retirement twelve years, when dying in the year 716, he was honourably buried in the self-same place.‡

Wife and issue of Ethelred.

The wife of Ethelred was Ostrid, who was slain, as we have seen above, by the nobles of Mercia. By her he had one son, named Ceolred. Convinced of the injustice which he had been guilty of, in depriving his nephew, Cenred, of the crown, he appointed him to succeed him in the kingdom, and not Ceolred, his son.

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 12.

† Bede in epitome.

‡ Bede, lib. iv. cap. 14. Malmsb. lib. i. cap. 4.

CENRED, *the eighth KING of MERCIA.*

CONTENT with his former situation, and pleased in the enjoyment of A. D. 704. a private life, Cenred had spent his youthful days in retirement and study, far removed from the splendour of a court. It seems rather in compliance with the demands of his people, than his own particular wish, that he quitted his retreat, and took upon him the government of Mercia: this material change seems not to have been agreeable to him, whose very soul was set upon religious enquiries. The uproar and noise of the busy world was irksome and disgustful to him; and so long had he been accustomed to think and act in a manner totally different from that which his present exalted state required, his heart soon panted for the more pleasing solitude again. Five years he held the title of a king, when overcome by the irresistible impulse, occasioned by the recollection of his former enjoyment, of the quiet comforts of life, he quitted the court, and left his crown as a thing despised, when weighed in the balance with a contented mind. Soon after, with Offa, king of the East Angles, and Edwine, bishop of Worcester, he went to Rome, (the fashionable pilgrimage of those times) and was there made a monk by pope Constantine, in the church of St. Peter. At Rome he spent the remainder of his life, employed continually in acts of piety and benevolence.\*

Cenred prefers a monastic life to the crown of Mercia.

CEOLRED, or CELRED, *the ninth KING of MERCIA.*

THE quiet and peaceable disposition of Cenred was as ill suited to the A. D. 709. turbulent and warlike genius of the Mercians, as the fatigue of dignity was to himself; so that when he quitted the crown, they received Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, for their king, with the greatest acclamations of joy and satisfaction. This was a man as remarkable for his personal bravery and conduct, as his predecessor had been for his piety; and though the people in general loved Cenred, whose virtues had endeared him to the more thinking part; yet was Ceolred by far more acceptable as a governor; for his lively temper and valour led them to expect great things from his administration. Virtue they loved, but glory was the object of their wishes.†

Ceolred elected king with great applause.

Scarce had Ceolred mounted the throne of Mercia, before the peace, A. D. 715. which had long blessed the Mercian state, was broke through, and war commenced with the West Saxons. Which parties were the aggressors, or what was the cause, is not known; but with such implacable hatred was the war pursued, that it was not decided for the space of seven years, during all which interval various skirmishes were made, and battles fought, with different success, yet no considerable advantage was gained

Ceolred makes war in Mercia.

\* Malmf. lib. i. cap. 4. Chron. Bromton. & J. Redbourne. & Vita Egwini Epif.

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† Malmf. lib. i. cap. 4. Hen. Hunt. Mat. West. &c.

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by

A. D. 715. by either. After this long jarring had continued, the two kings met with their powers at a place called Wodens burh, where also the victory remained doubtful, prodigious slaughter being made in both armies; yet the loss which either sustained put a stop to the war; for if they were not reconciled to each other, they were so prudent at least to retire, with the design of recruiting their strength before hostilities were again commenced.

The death of  
Ceolred, &c.

In the year of our Lord 716, not long after Ceolred's return to Mercia, he departed this life, having reigned with great honour near eight years. His body was buried in the cathedral church of Litchfield. His wife is said to have been named Wereburga, by whom he had no children. She survived him many years, being very old at the time of her death.\*

### ETHELBALD, the tenth KING of MERCIA.

A. D. 716. CEOLRED dying without issue, Ethelbald, the son of Alweo, descended from Wibba,† was advanced to the royal dignity. The character of Ethelbald is strongly delineated in the ancient records, as a man of violent passions, impatient of controul, and immoderately fond of power and dominion: this disposition occasioned the title which is commonly annexed to his name, as the proud, or haughty, king.‡ He held the government with great valour, and administered justice with an equal hand: yet he himself is heavily accused of refusing lawful marriage; not through the commendable preference of a life of celibacy, but the rather to obtain the fruition of his libidinous desires with the less restraint. He violated the chastity of maidens consecrated to God, and seduced married women from the bosoms of their husbands, taking them to his bed, without regarding the consequence which might ensue from so open a violation of the Christian laws, and the evil example set to his subjects. Nor were the nobles behind hand with their sovereign; for treading in his steps, they followed their lewd pursuits without the least restraint.||

The character  
of Ethelbald.

A. D. 733. The first action of consequence performed by Ethelbald, was the siege of the castle of Sommerton, which he won by force of arms. Some time after, observing the peaceable state of the Northumbers, under the rule of their religious king, Ceolnulf, he entered the borders of that kingdom, and finding little or no resistance, advanced with his army, and gained great spoils, returning in triumph back again to Mercia.§

Ethelbald in-  
vades Northum-  
berland.

\* Florentius, monk of Worcester.

† His genealogy is thus set down in the Saxon Chronicle: Ethelbald the son of Alweo, the son of Eoppa, the son of Wibba, second king of Mercia.

‡ Superbas Rex, &c. Vide Malmbsbury, Bromton. Hunt. &c. &c.

|| Epist. Boniface, in Chron. William Malmbsbury, lib. i. cap. 4.

§ Chron. J. Bromton.

Some time after, whilst Egbert, king of Northumberland, (who succeeded Ceolnulf in that realm) was busily employed in his wars against the Picts and Britons, Ethelbald, well pleased with his former success, re-entered that kingdom, and pursued his destructive marches without any opposition; for, as the principal part of the Northumbrian forces were employed in the northern wars, the southern parts of the province were left open to the enemy, who cruelly wasted and destroyed the country wherever they came.\*

Ethelbald again  
invades Northumberland.

Two years after his expedition in Northumberland, Ethelbald invaded A. D. 742. Wessex with a mighty army, and marched against Cuthred, who had then but just began his reign in that kingdom. Various skirmishes ensued, and Ethelbald seemed bent upon the destruction of his foe; for he not only assailed him by open war, but by private practices endeavoured to procure his overthrow. Cuthred, on the other hand, being a man of great courage, resisted all the repeated efforts of Ethelbald, and finally gave him battle, which was fought with much bravery on both sides, and after great effusion of blood, the differences were made up, and the two inveterate enemies reconciled to each other.†

Ethelbald  
invades Wessex.

Two years more had elapsed, when the Britons (the common enemy A. D. 744. of the Saxons in general) fell under the displeasure of these two princes, who joining their forces together, made war upon them. The miserable Britons were in no condition to resist the united powers of Mercia and Wessex; wherefore, leaving their habitations, after a few slight skirmishes, they sought by flight to secure themselves from the swords of their enemies; but being fiercely pursued by the Saxons, a prodigious slaughter was made. Ethelbald, after this conquest, returned to Mercia, and held his rule for some time in peace.‡

The Britons  
overcome.

A quiet life to a man whose soul delights in war, is tedious and irksome. A. D. 754. some, glory and power are generally the chief objects of his thoughts, and the business of the camp his best amusement: minds like these, not the softer enjoyment of peace, nor ever conceive the value of that heavenly blessing! Thus Ethelbald, disgusted with the tranquility that prevailed in his state, broke through the sacred bond of peace, and sought in the field of war that satisfaction which at home he found not. Jealous of Cuthred's fame, he once more turned his arms against him, and invaded Wessex with a mighty power, but unsuccessfully; for, at Beorgford, his army was overthrown by the West Saxons, with prodigious slaughter, he himself, with the remnant, making their escape by a precipitate flight.

Ethelbald again  
invades Wessex.

\* Chron. J. Bromton, & alia.

† Chron. Sax. sub anno 742. Malmf-  
bury, &c.

‡ Ibid. Ibid.

§ Vel Bedford. Vide Chron. J. Brom-  
ton.



- A. D. 756. Vexed to the soul at this sudden turn of fortune, Ethelbald returned to Mercia; not, indeed, with a resolution to sit down tamely under his loss, but with full intent to revenge his shame severely upon the conquerors. He only waited till he had recruited his army, and a proper opportunity served, to commence the war afresh, and harraßs the borders of Wesssex. But Cuthred with his forces opposed his march with great courage, and drove him back to Sceadune, where a decisive battle was fought; after a long engagement, the Mercians were routed, and Ethelbald himself was murdered in his retreat by one of his own chieftains, named Beornred. His body was after buried at Ripendune.\* This fatal accident happened in the year of our Lord 757, after he had reigned with great glory the space of forty-one years.† He left no children behind him; for indeed it does not appear that he was ever married.

The death of  
Ethelbald.

*BEORNRED, the eleventh KING of MERCIA.*

- A. D. 757. No sooner had the traitor Beornred murdered his master, than he mounted the throne, and caused himself to be proclaimed king. But he did not long triumph in the success of his treachery; for, before he had held the kingdom the space of one year, a young man of noble blood, named Offa,‡ rebelled against him, and in a fierce battle overthrew his forces, and slew him in the field.

The overthrow  
of Beornred.

*OFFA, the twelfth KING of MERCIA.*

- A. D. 757. THE sudden success of Offa gained him great applause in the kingdom of Mercia; so that, after the death of the usurper, with one consent, the people advanced him to the royal dignity. Offa was a valiant man in the field, and a refined politician in the cabinet; but all his virtues in general were eclipsed by his unbounded ambition, which hurried him on to the commission of such vile actions, as have stamped an eternal blot upon his character.

The character  
of Offa.

- A. D. 774. When Offa had been seated upon the throne of Mercia about fourteen years, he began to entertain the thoughts of extending his dominion by the conquest of the neighbouring realms. The first people who felt the fury of his arms are called the Hestings, and seem to have been a small division of the East Angles, which he presently subdued, and added to Mercia. From thence he marched into Kent, and in a bloody battle overcame the combined forces of that nation, under the conduct of Alric, their king; but whether the people were afterwards tributary to him, cannot be discovered. As for Alric, it seems very clear that he reigned peaceably for several years after.§

Offa wars  
against the  
neighbouring  
kings.

\* Ripon, in Derbyshire.

† Chron. Sax. sub anno 757.

‡ Offa was a descendant from Wibba. The Saxon Chron. thus derives his pedigree, Offa the son of Dincferth, the son

of Eanwulf, the son of Ofimond, the son of Eava, the son of Wibba.

§ Chron. Sax. sub anno 774. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 4. H. Hunt. &c.

The next year after his conquests in Kent, Offa marched into Wesssex, A. D. 775. and warred upon Cynewulf, who ruled in that district. Their principal dispute seems to have been concerning the town of Bensington, which, however, Offa won from the West Saxon, after he had defeated his forces in the field. These conquests added such consequence to the name of Offa, that he was justly feared by the other Saxon kings; every one was anxious for his own safety, and desirous, by some means or other, to secure the friendship of this mighty monarch; so that the power of Offa was daily increased. Yet far from being affected with haughtiness and pride by his exalted state, he held the government with so much prudence, that he secured at once his own glory, and the good-will of his subjects.\*

Offa wins the town of Bensington.

Fortune crowning his attempts in the east and western parts of Britain, Offa turned his arms towards the north, and conducted his victorious army beyond the Humber, where he made considerable conquests, and that without much difficulty; for the Northumbrians at this time were divided amongst themselves, and by their own domestic quarrels facilitated the advancement of the foreign foe. After these important conquests in Northumberland, his next care was to secure the borders of his kingdom from the inroads of the Britons, who inhabited beyond him to the west; which, that he might the better effect, he caused a large dyke to be made, beginning on the south at the mouth of the river Wye, and extending northward to the Dee. During the time that Offa was busied in the performance of this stupendous work, Marmodius, the chief ruler in Wales, seemed to wink at his designs, but was mean while making all the preparation in private that he could, in order to fall suddenly upon the army of Offa, at a time in which he could have no suspicion of such an attempt. It is also said, that he was secretly assisted by the Northumbrians and the West Saxons, which is by no means unlikely. When the design was ripe for execution, Marmodius, the better to blind the searching eyes of Offa, sent a formal embassy, to demand a truce for a certain stated time; during which space some method might be thought on between them, by means of which they might conclude a final peace, which should be advantageous to both parties. The fair proposals of the Britons were kindly received by Offa, who not suspecting their treacherous design, granted the time of truce which they demanded, in a very friendly manner. Their plot so far succeeded as well as they could desire; and it being now near Christmas, they waited quietly until the evening of St. Stephen's day, when uniting the whole of their forces together, they went down suddenly upon the army of Offa, and filling up part of the new dyke, entered the camp, and made a great slaughter: for the Mercian soldiers knowing that the time of the truce was not yet

Offa conquers Northumberland, and makes a large dyke on the borders of Wales.

\* Chron. Sax. sub anno 774. Malmf. lib. i. cap. 4. H. Hunt. &c.

A. D. 778. expired, thought themselves secure, and were more intent upon the celebration of the Christmas feast, than the making defence with their swords. Offa finding himself thus infamously betrayed, rallied his forces again, and secured his retreat in the best manner that he could, and for a time withdrew himself into the heart of Mercia, to reinforce his army.\*

A. D. 779. Incensed with fury, and the ardent desire of revenging the treacherous dealings of the Britons, early the next year he sufficiently strengthened his army, and marching into Wales, in a bloody battle overcame Marmodius and his associates. After this, he destroyed the country round about, and drove the Britons to the greatest distress. When he had completed his vengeance, he came back, and repaired the part of the dyke which had been broken down, and set every thing in order upon the western borders of Mercia: this done, he returned to his court, and began, by powerful alliances, to strengthen his state. He now sat down in peace, and for a considerable time attended to the affairs of his own realm, making no attempt upon the neighbouring kings.†

A. D. 791. Still desirous of securing the importance of his dominions upon the surest foundation; those whom he thought might at any time prove dangerous, he determined to hold by a stronger bond than that of mere friendship. In order to effect this design, he married his eldest daughter, Eadburge, to Beorhtric, king of Wessex, who, proud of the alliance with so great a monarch, had sought her of her father in marriage; and his second daughter, Elfeda, he gave to Ethelred, king of Northumberland, after he was reinstated in his throne, from whence he had been expelled by the people.‡

A. D. 792. Elfeda, third daughter of Offa, was promised to Ethelbyrhte, the king of the East Angles; who being kindly invited by her father to his court, went thither in order to consummate the marriage, but was cruelly slain by the command of Offa: not content with the glory of his reign, and the extent of his dominions, he was determined in this base and treacherous manner to secure the kingdom of this unfortunate prince, and add it to his own. Immediately after the death of Ethelbyrhte, Offa went with his army into the East Angles, and soon subdued the whole province. Thus did the inordinate thirst of power prevail on this mighty Mercian king, to commit a crime of the blackest nature, which is aggravated by the most infamous treachery and deceit; in short, so base an action is scarcely to be found again in all our annals.§

The

\* Matthew Paris, in Vita Offæ.

† Ibid.

‡ H. Hunt. lib iv. Ethelwerd, &c.

§ Matthew Paris, who has made a legendary life of Offa, lays the chief blame

upon his wife, declaring, that the endeavoured to persuade him to commit this murder, but he refused; wherefore, she herself undertook it, and caused the prince to be murdered on his wedding night.

All

The year after this bloody deed was done, Offa assisted his son-in-law, A. D. 793. Beorhtric, against the Danes, who had arrived upon the confines of his dominions, in three large ships, and by his timely aid they were driven back with considerable loss. After this, Offa pretended great sorrow for the murder of Ethelbyrhte, and in order in some measure to expiate for the offence, he went to Rome, where he obtained permission to build the abbey of St. Albans; and, after the example of his predecessor, Ina, made the kingdom subject to the Romescot, or Peter-pence. At his return to Mercia, the abbey of St. Albans was begun, and just as it was completed, this great monarch departed this life, in the year of our Lord 796, after he had reigned nine and thirty years in the greatest splendour.\*

Offa repels the Danes, and goes to Rome.

The wife of Offa was named Quendrida,† of whom we know but little; yet she seems to have been a woman of good condition, but no way remarkable for her virtues. By her he had issue, one son, and three daughters: Egferth, the son, succeeded his father in the kingdom; Ethelburga, the elder daughter, was married to Beorhtric; Elfreda, the second daughter, to Ethelred, king of Northumberland; and Elfreda, the youngest, was betrothed to the unfortunate Ethelbyrhte, the king of the East Angles; after the death of this prince, she, with great lamentations, abandoned the society of men, and withdrew herself to the monastery of Crowland,‡ and there spent her life in religious solitude.§

The wife and issue of Offa.

### EGFERTH, the twelfth KING of MERCIA.

EGFERTH, the joy of his parents, had been crowned king of Mercia A. D. 796. during his father's life-time, and reigned jointly with him till the day of his death, when he took the whole government of the realm upon him.

Egferth's sudden death.

All this is done to exculpate Offa, who was the founder of St. Albans, for which action the monks have hastily passed over this cruel deed; but his afterwards subduing the kingdom of the East Angles in such a sudden and unlawful manner, may plainly prove the part he acted in the murder was more than that of a bystander.

\* W. Malmf. l. i. cap. 4. Chr. Sax. &c.

† Matthew Paris, in his legendary life of Offa, calls her *Drida*, and says, she was kinwoman to Charles the Great, king of France; and that being accused of some heinous offence, she was put into a boat without either rudder, sail, or oar, and left in the midst of the sea to the fortune of the waves. After she had a time been wafted to and fro, she was cast upon the British shore, and being taken thence, was brought to Offa, who relieved her wants, and had her carefully conducted to

his palace. She so well justified her conduct to Offa, that he was much pleased with her address; and she being a fair and lovely woman, he made her his wife, to the great grief of his parents, and the dislike of the nobles of the realm. But this account has so much the air of romance, and not being confirmed by any ancient record, it is justly set aside.

‡ Thus says Matthew Paris; others affirm, that she was afterwards married to Cenwulf, king of Mercia.

§ Capgrave gives Offa another son, named Fremund, slain by Oswy, and buried at Offchurch; and quotes an author, named Burghad, said to have been present at the death of the prince. But Speed imagines him to have been mistaken, because the wars with the Danes, which occasioned his death, happened not till one hundred years after.

The

- A. D. 796. The exact time of his coronation is not recorded, but it certainly was towards the latter end, if not the last year, of Offa's reign. Egferth was a young man of an amiable disposition, and much beloved by his subjects in general. His prosperous beginning, and the prudence which he soon discovered, left room for great expectations; but all his people's hopes were quickly depressed by his sudden death, which happened one hundred and forty days after the decease of his father, to the great grief of all who knew him. He left no issue behind him.\*

KENULPH, or CENWULF, *the thirteenth* KING of MERCIA.

- A. D. 796. VIRTUOUS young Egferth being so suddenly snatched away, the choice of the Mercians fell upon Cenwulf, a nobleman descended from Wibba. This prince is famous for his justice and many virtues; avoiding the errors of others, he was religious without being superstitious, and valiant without being cruel: in the defence of his country he flew to the field, but yet in the midst of his conquests remembered, that mercy was the hero's noblest attribute.†

Character of Cenwulf.  
Cenwulf invades Kent, and his success.  
The civil discords which had long prevailed in Kent, had so violently shaken that kingdom, and lessened its consequence, that Cenwulf imagined it would now be no hard matter quickly to complete the ruin that seemed to threaten its state. Determining to try the fortune of war, he entered the borders of Kent with his army, and gave battle to Ethelbert Pren, who had usurped the government, and after a sharp engagement, overthrew his forces, Pren himself being made prisoner by the Mercians. This victory obtained, Cenwulf followed his fortunes, and subjugated all the state, raising a man, named Cuthred, to the throne, who held his rule under him. The captive, Pren, Cenwulf carried with him into Mercia, where he detained him for some little space; and at the dedication of a church which he, Cenwulf, had built at Winchomb, Pren was led up to the high altar, and there set at liberty, without fine or ransom. This noble action added greatly to the honour which Cenwulf had already acquired.‡

- A. D. 799. His next wars were in Northumberland, against Eardulf, with whom he fought a bloody battle; but the particulars of it being hastily passed over, it is impossible to declare who had the victory: however, not long after, a peace was concluded upon between the two parties, and Cenwulf returned home to Mercia. From this time, his reign appears to have been spent in perfect tranquility, to the day of his death, which happened after he had reigned three and twenty years. His body was buried at Winchomb, in the county of Gloucester, in the church which himself had built.§

\* Malm. l. i. c. 4. Chron. Sax. &c.

† Ibid. & Brompton, &c.

‡ Ibid. & Hist. Ethelwerdi.

§ Ibid. Ibid.

His wife's name was Ælfthryth, but her parentage is unknown; unless she was, as some have supposed, the younger daughter of Offa, who was betrothed to the murdered Ethelbyrht; but this is not very likely, for had she been of such noble lineage, it would have scarcely been forgot by the ancient historians.\* By this lady he had issue, one son, and two daughters: Cenelm, the son, was yet a child at his father's death; Quendreda, the eldest daughter, after her father's death, wickedly aspiring to the throne, (as some report) caused her brother to be slain. The youngest daughter is named Bergenhild; of her we find nothing recorded, more than the love she bore to her brother, and her sorrow for his death.†

The wife and issue of Cenwulf.

CENELM, the fourteenth KING of MERCIA.

CENWULF being deceased, Cenelm, his only son, (then but a child) A. D. 819. was appointed to succeed him; but shortly after his advancement, he was, by some fatal accident, unfortunately, though innocently, slain by the hand of his sister Quendreda, whereby he obtained the name and honour of a martyr.‡ He was first privately buried, but afterwards his body was removed, and reburied, with great solemnity, in the church of

Cenelm unfortunately slain.

\* One thing may be here observed, that either Cenwulf had two wives, or this one sometimes bore a different name. An original charter of this king's, preserved in the Cotton library, begins thus, "Ego Cenwulf una cum conjugē meā Cenegitha regina Merc. &c." To which charter, Cenelm filii regis, is one of the witnesses. In two others in the same book, the name is as above. I have not ventured to affirm upon this authority that he had two wives, because no such circumstance is mentioned in the ancient authors. The curious may find these charters in a large book, marked Augustus II. and their numbers, x. 91 & 94.

† Vide Bromton, Redbourne, &c.

‡ The story of the death of this prince is so differently related, that one can scarcely tell what judgment to form upon it. Aferius, the Saxon Chronicle, Ethelwerd, Henry Huntingdon, and R. Hoveden, make no mention of Cenelm; Malmfbury indeed does, but passes over this important transaction in the following hasty manner: "Cenelmus puer admodum a fore sua Quendrida innocē casus nomen & decus Martirii adeptus," which is in substance the same as I have related above. But how totally different are the accounts of H. Higden, Matthew of Westminster,

T. Redbourne, and J. Bromton, who all relate the story in or near the following manner: Quendrida wickedly aspiring to the throne of Mercia, prevailed upon Askebert, the tutor of the young prince, to murder him; which vile action he performed one day as he was hunting, in a thick wood, and privately buried his body under a thorn-bush. They further add, that the murder was discovered, as well as the dead body of the unfortunate youth, by means of a dove, that carried a slip of parchment in its beak to Rome, and laid it upon the high altar in St. Peter's church. On which was written, in Saxon characters, these words, "In Clenccon bað, Cenelm Ciningbajne, heð under thopne, heaved bepeaved." "In Clenc cow pasture, Cenelm, the king's child, lieth under a thorn, bereaved of his head." Quendrida, after the discovery of the murder, died with shame and grief, for having been the cause of so foul a deed. But this trifling story borders so much upon the legendary tale, that I have set aside the whole account, and preferred that of Malmfbury, which, though considerably shorter, is yet much more likely to be true.

A. D. 819. Winchomb, by the side of his father. His reign was not above five months.

CEOLWULF, *the fifteenth KING of MERCIA.*

A. D. 819. AFTER the murder of Cenelm, Ceolwulf, his uncle, took the government upon him; but it seems not to have been with the general content of the people; for scarcely had he sat two years upon the throne, before Beornwulf, a nobleman of Mercia, rebelled against him, and was joined by those who were discontented with his management of the state. He soon found himself deserted on all sides,\* and was driven from the kingdom with disgrace. This prince had one daughter, named Elfseda, after married to Wiglaf, the substitute king of Mercia, under Egbert.

Ceolwulf dis-  
pleasing to the  
people.

BEORNWULF, *the sixteenth KING of MERCIA.*

A. D. 821. CEOLWULF being driven from the throne, Beornwulf (who all this while had been aiming at the imperial dignity) seized upon the government. He was descended from Osher, a man reputed to be of the blood royal of Mercia. Valour and ambition are the strong characteristics of this prince, and in the end proved his destruction. After he had held his scepter with a strong hand upwards of two years, he cast a jealous eye on Egbert, the powerful king of the West Saxons, and fearful of his rising fame, challenged him to the field. Egbert desirous of pushing his fortune on, which now flowed high, accepted the challenge, and met him at Ellendon,† where they fought a bloody battle, and prodigious slaughter was made on either side; at last, however, victory declared for the West Saxons, and Beornwulf, with his party, was driven from the field. One evil seldom comes unaccompanied by another; immediately after this defeat, the East Angles, who had been grievously oppressed by the Mercians under Offa, threw off their yoke, and entering Mercia, added to the distress of that dominion. In endeavouring to save his bleeding country from total ruin, the unhappy Beornwulf lost his life, before he had fully completed the third year of his reign.‡

Beornwulf chal-  
lenges Egbert to  
the field.

LUDECAN, *the seventeenth KING of MERCIA.*

A. D. 825. No sooner was the death of Beornwulf known to the Mercians, than they advanced Ludecan, a valiant chieftain, to the throne, and made all the preparation that they could to revenge the revolt of the East Angles. But Egbert aiding them, they were too powerful for the Mercians, and overcame them in the field. In this fatal conflict fell Ludecan, and five

Mercia subdued.

\* Malmf. lib. i. cap. 4. Chron. Sax. sub anno 821.

† Or Wilton. Vide Milton's Hist. of Eng. fol. 219.

‡ Malmf. ut sup. Chron. Sim. Dunelm. & H. Hunt. lib. iv.

of his chieftains, bravely struggling to defend the falling state, but A. D. 825. all in vain: for now the destined time was come, in which the glory of Mercia should decline. Ludecan being slain, Wiglaf seized upon the government, but he was presently after subdued by Egbert, and the whole dominion made tributary to the West Saxons.

From this time the kingdom of Mercia ceased to be an independant A. D. 826. state; though it is true it still continued to have its own kings, yet they were no more than viceroys, or rulers, under the kings of Wessex, and the accounts of them will naturally follow in the succeeding part of the Chronicle; for which reason, we will here break off the history of Mercia, and take our final leave of the heptarchy, which we have carefully traced out from its first beginning: imperfect indeed, and interrupted with frequent chasms, are these early parts of our annals, yet ought they not to be passed over as uninteresting. The rise and fall of these little kingdoms exhibit a great variety of different characters, many of them very important and amusing.

The history of Mercia broke off, and why.

THE END OF THE HEPTARCHY.



\* \* For the better Understanding of the Genealogy of the Kings of the Heptarchy, the following Tables are here subjoined, which exhibit at one View the different Branches from which each particular King was descended, as far as they could be traced out with any Certainty. To these are added, the Chronological Order of the Year, in which each Monarch began his Reign, and when he died.

The last Table (No. VIII.) shews the regular Succession of the Monarchs, or chief Kings of the Heptarchy, on whom the honorary Title of "King of the Englishmen" was bestowed.

# TABLE I.

Began to reign.	Died.	<i>Succession of the Kings of the South Saxons.</i>	
477	514	Æ L L E.	
514	590	Cymen.	Wlenching. C I S S A.
590	681	EDELWALCH.	
681		Two Dukes, BERTHUNUS and ANTHUN.	

Note, that on the same line with each king, is set the year on which he began his reign, and when he died. Those names in Italics joined with this mark = are the persons married into the different families.

# TABLE II.

*Succession of the Kings of Kent, with their Issue.*

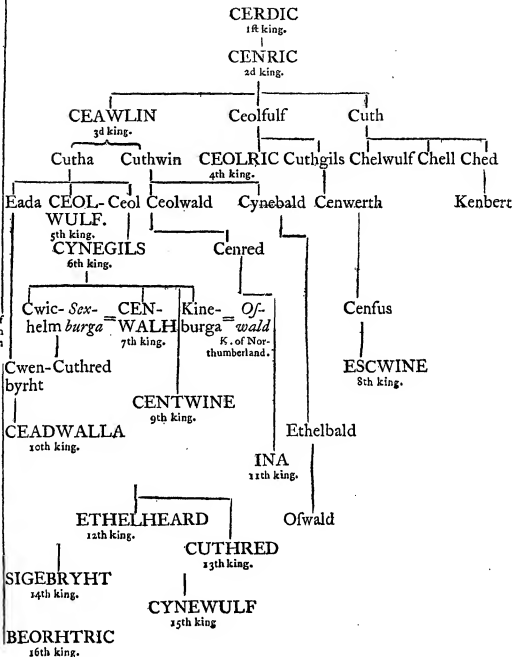
WITHGILS, a German chieftain.

Began to reign.	Died.	
A.D.	A.D.	
457	488	Horfa HENGIST 1st king of Kent. Oöta
489	513	Hatwaker ÆSC 2d king. Rowena = <i>Vortigern</i> King of the Britons.
513	535	OöTA 3d king.
535	560	HERMENRIC 4th king.
560	616	Second wife's name not known. = ETHELBERT 5th king. Berta Daughter of Chilperic, k. of France. Rikell = <i>Sledda</i> King of the East Saxons.
616	640	Ethelburga = <i>Edwine</i> K. of Northumberland. Married his father's 2d wife. = EDBALD 6th king. Emmc, 2d wife Daughter of Theodore, k. of Lorayne.
640	664	Ermenred = Oöave Sexburga Daughter of Anna, k. of the E. Angles. = ERCOMBERT 7th king. Enfwith
664	673	Ethelred Ethelbert Domphena Ermin-burga. Erin-burga. Ermen-gytha. EGBERT 8th king.
673	685	Both slain by Egbert. Married to a Mercian prince. All three nuns. LOTHAIRE 9th king.
685	687	EDRIC 10th king.
692		Interregnum five years. WYCHERD and WEBHARD, two usurping tyrants.
694	725	WIHTRED 11th king.
725	748	EDBERT 12th king.
748	759	ETHELBERT 13th king.
759	793	ALRIC 14th king.
794		Three usurpers. { ETHELBERT PREN CUTHRED. BALDRED.
797		
805		

Began to reign.	Died.
A.D.	A.D.
519	533
533	569
560	592
592	597
597	611
611	642
643	672
674	676
676	685
685	689
689	728
728	742
742	758
758	ibid.
758	788
788	802

# T A B L E III.

## *Succession of the Kings of Wessex.*



# T A B L E IV.

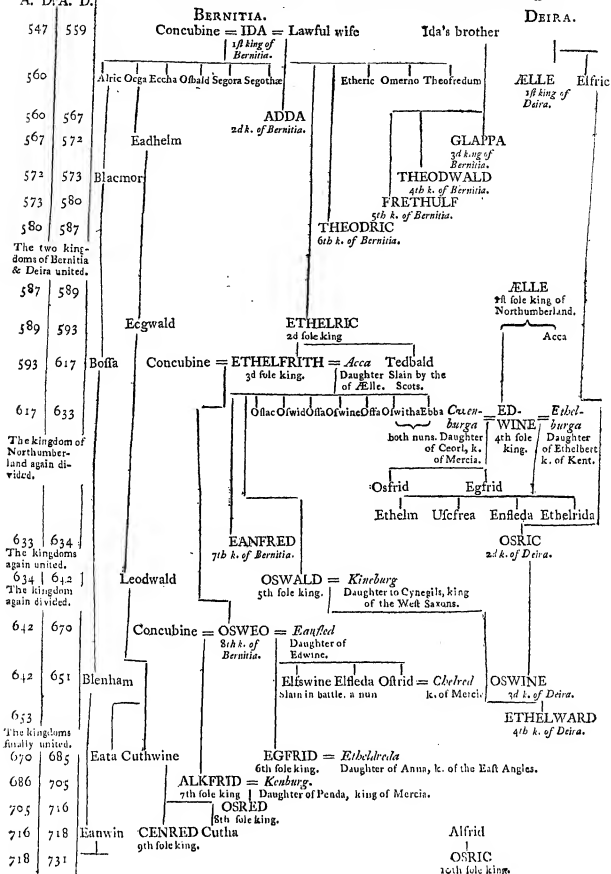
## *Succession of the East Saxon Kings.*

Began to reign.	Died.	
A.D.	A.D.	
527	587	ERCHENWIN 1st king.
587	597	SLEDDA = <i>Rikell</i> 2d king. Daughter to Hermenic, k. of Kent.
597	615	Sigbald, or Sexbald      SEBERT = <i>Ethelgoda</i> 3d king.
615	617	SERRED      SEWARD      SIGEBERT 4th king.      5th king.      6th king.
617	645	SIGEBERT the Little 7th king.
645	661	SIGEBERT 8th king.
661	664	SWITHELM 9th king.
664		SEBBA      SIGHER = <i>Ofwith</i> 10th king.      11th king. Daughter of Ethelfrith, king Obiit. 683.      Obiit. 691. of Northumberland.
691		SIGHARD      SENFRED 12th king.      13th king.
701		OFFA 14th king.
708		SELRED 15th king.
746		SWITHED 16th, and last king.

Began  
to reign.  
A. D. A. D.

# TABLE V.

*Succession of the Kings of Northumberland, with their Issue.*



*Continuation of the fifth Table.*

		Eanwin	Eata	Cutha	
731				CEOLWULF	
738			EGBERT	12th sole king.	
759	759		OSWULF	13th sole king.	
759	770			EDILWALD	14th sole king.
770		ALURED			
779		15th sole king.		ETHELRED	16th sole king.
782	791		ALFWOLD	17th sole king.	
791		OSRED			
792	795	18th sole king.		ETHELRED	
		Alchmund slain by Eardulf.		Restored to the kingdom.	

There reigned beside in Northumberland, OSWALD twenty-eight days; after him, EARDULF, who was driven from his throne; and others, but the accounts of them are so very confused, they are omitted in the table.

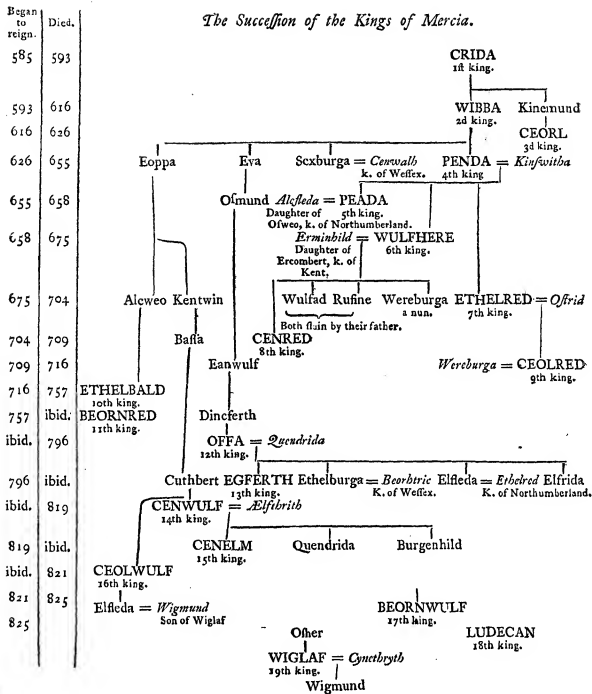
T A B L E VI.

*Succession of the Kings of the East Angles, and their Issue.*

Began to reign.	Died.	
575	582	UFFA 1st king.
582	593	TITULUS 2d king.
593	629	Eric REDWALD = his wife = a former husband. 3d king.
629	635	Regenhere EORPWALD Slain in battle. 4th king.
635	641	
641	643	ANNA = Heriswida 7th king. Daughter of Hericus
643	654	SIGEBERT 5th king. EGRIC 6th king.
654	655	Firminus Erkenwald Etheldreda Sexburga = Ercombert Slain in battle. Bishop of London. Famous virgin wife. K. of Kent. Ethilburga 8th king. = Heriswitha Abbess of Barking.
656	665	ETHELHERE 9th king.
665	767	ADULF ELSWULF BEORN 10th king. 11th king. 12th king.
767	792	ETHELRED = Laenorin 13th king. ETHELBYRHTE 14th king.

# T A B L E VII.

## The Succession of the Kings of Mercia.



# T A B L E VIII.

*The regular Succession of the Saxon Monarchs during the Heptarchy.*

			T A B L E	VIII.
Began their monarchy.	Died, or were expelled.	No.	<i>The regular Succession of the Saxon Monarchs during the Heptarchy.</i>	
457 488	1	HENGIST,	first king of Kent.	
489 514	2	ÆLLE,	first king of the South Saxons.	
519 533	3	CERDIC,	first king of the West Saxons.	
534 559	4	CENRIC,	the second king of the West Saxons.	
560 591	5	CEAWLIN,	the third king of the West Saxons.	
593 616	6	ETHELBERT,	the fifth king of Kent.	
616 629	7	REDWALD,	the third king of the East Angles.	
630 633	8	EDWINE,	the fourth king of all Northumberland.	
634 642	9	OSWALD,	the fifth king of all Northumberland.	
642 670	10	OSWEO,	the eighth king of Bernitia.	
670 675	11	WULFHERE,	the sixth king of Mercia.	
675 704	12	ETHELRED,	the seventh king of Mercia.	
704 709	13	CENRED,	the eighth king of Mercia.	
709 716	14	CELRED,	the ninth king of Mercia.	
716 757	15	ETHELBALD,	the tenth king of Mercia.	
758 796	16	OFFA,	the eleventh king of Mercia.	
796 796	17	EGFERTH,	the twelfth king of Mercia.	
796 819	18	KENWULF,	the thirteenth king of Mercia.	
820 837	19	EGBERT,	the seventeenth king of Wessex, and the first absolute monarch of the heptarchy.	



## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T III.

THE ANCIENT RELIGION AND CHURCH HISTORY OF THE BRITONS  
AND SAXONS, FROM THE LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO THE  
END OF THE HEPTARCHY.

## C H A P. I.

*Druidical Religion of the Britons.*

**R**ELIGIOUS superstition is easily raised in ignorant and unen-  
lightened minds; for every people, however barbarous, have some faint ideas of a Being, to whom they owe their existence; and those weak sparks of light may, without much difficulty, be blown up into a flame of zeal by others, who appear to be better acquainted with sacred matters, or more holy, than themselves. Thus, all nations have religious rites, and priests to assist their offerings to the superior powers. The priests soon found it needful to call to their aid pretended miracles, and mysterious doctrines, assisted by solemn and unusual gestures, to strike the greater awe upon the minds of their beholders: for, though the ignorant may have been easily persuaded to believe whatever should be told them of the reality and wisdom of their gods, yet the genius of mankind generally makes them fond of the wonderful, and esteem those things the most, which they can the least comprehend. It requires a greater light than that which is barely afforded by nature, to conquer those prejudices, and lead a man to judge fairly for himself, in matters which seem to be (and undoubtedly are) of such real importance to him. Hence it becomes necessary for the designing priests to keep their knowledge to themselves, and lead the generality of people into greater darkness than they were before: but lest some aspiring genius might spring up to discover the fallacy of their proceedings, and

The craft and  
deceit of the an-  
cient priests.

the film from the eyes of the deluded multitude, a certain bound was set to their religious enquiries, and every individual strictly forbid, under pain of the severest penalties, to believe either more or less than what he had been instructed by the priests themselves. Yet, as something more than natural and naked truths were required to keep the multitude in obedience, and make them quietly acquiesce in these arbitrary measures, the priests were not backward in the propagation of wonders and extraordinary events; whilst by their mysterious actions, and pretending to secrets of the highest consequence, they secured the respect of the vulgar, who regarded them as the favourites of the gods. Those who obeyed their precepts, were thought worthy of their prayers; but threats and curses were denounced against the disobedient. By such means as these they laid fast hold on the minds of their followers, so that they were ready to sacrifice their wealth, their families, nay, their own lives, to the mercenary desires of these artful men. But all the ancient records of the known world cannot furnish a more striking view of the prevalence of superstition in the people, or the arbitrary government of the priests, than we shall find amongst the deluded Britons.\*

The power of  
the druids.

The religion of the Britons formed a very considerable part of their government; and their priests, who are called by the general name of druids,† were the chief in authority amongst them. Besides their ministering at the altar, they were entrusted with the tuition of the youth, they enjoyed an exemption from all taxes, and were never called upon to serve in the wars; they determined all controversies, public or private; they decreed all rewards and punishments; and if the offender did not abide by their sentence, he was instantly excommunicated; by which sentence, he was forbid access to their public sacrifices, and deprived of all the comforts of life; for his friends and acquaintance fled from him, and would in no wise hold intercourse with him, even in the most trifling matters: thus miserably forsaken of all, he was doomed to wander about, a wretch accursed, hated, and despised; whilst if any insulted, or abused him, he was denied the smallest protection from the law.‡

The knowledge  
of the druids,  
and their classes.

The druids were men of great penetration and learning, not, indeed, in books, but in human nature; they well understood the paths which

\* Strabo fairly declares the same, amongst his reasons assigned for the fabulous theology of the ancients. "It is impossible," (says he) to bring women, and the vulgar part of mankind, to religion, piety, and virtue, by the simple and unadorned dictates of reason; it is absolutely necessary to call in the aids of superstition, which must be supported by fables, and wonderful events of various kinds. For this cause those surprising fables of antiquity were invented

"to awaken the errors of superstition in the minds of the ignorant multitude." Strabo, lib. i. fol. 19.

† This name, Camden thinks, is derived from the Greek word *δρῦς*, which signifies an oak. Dr. Henry says, it comes more likely from the Celtic, or British word, *derw*, which also signifies an oak. Vide Camd. in *Introduct.* & Dr. Henry's *Hist. Brit.* lib. i. cap. 2.

‡ Cæsar. *Comment.* lib. vi. cap. 13.

led to the human heart, and neglected no opportunity of convincing the multitude of the importance of their doctrines. Under the general name of druids, were comprehended three different classes of religious men, who had all of them separate offices to perform: the bards, the *vates*, and the druids.\*

The office of the bards was to sing to the harp, the actions of heroes, and great men;† yet their numbers were not confined to the panegyric, for they would praise and extol the actions of some, whilst they would satirize and decry those of others. But of the excellency of their poems, and their judgment in composition, to select such passages as were the most striking, we need no farther proof, than the surprizing effect that their songs had upon their hearers; for the Britons paid a great regard to these men, not only in the affairs of peace, but also in war: sometimes, when two fierce armies have stood fronting each other in array of battle, their swords drawn, their lances pointing to the foe, and waiting but the signal to begin the conflict, the bards have then stepped in between, and touched their lyres with such harmony, and so persuaded them with their flowing numbers, that suddenly on either side the soldiers dropped their arms, and forgot the fierce resentment that struggled in their breasts.‡ As to all the ceremonies of the altar, and religious rites, the bards had no share in them; their poems and their music seem to have been the whole of the studies belonging to their office.

The next class are the *vates*, or *paidi*; these were of the order of the priesthood, and performed the principal parts of all the religious ceremonies; such as sacrificing the victims, making offerings, and delivering out prophecies and predictions from an observation of nature, and contemplation on the causes of things. This was not all their office demanded, for they composed hymns in honour of their gods, which they sung to the music of their harps at their sacred solemnities. Both Gaul and Britain abounded with these religious poets, and pretended prophets.§

The third, and last, class was by far the most numerous; these were the druids, to whom belonged the performance of all the religious offices which came not under the order of the *paidi*; though, indeed, it may reasonably be thought, that, when the last were absent, they might officiate for them, if any case of immediate necessity required. Great part of their employment was in philosophical researches, and study of the heavenly bodies, their motions, the magnitude of the universe, and the earth, of the nature of things, and of the power of the immortal gods;|| of all which they used largely to discourse to their disciples.

\* Βαρδοι τε καὶ Οὔδναι, καὶ Δρυΐδαι; *Bardi, Vates, & Druidæ*; horum *Bardi* hymnos canunt poetæque sunt; *Vates* sacrificant & naturam rerum contemplantur; *Druidæ* præter hanc philosophiam etiam de moribus disputant. Strabo, lib. iv.

† Lucan, & Ammian. Marcell. lib. xv. cap. 9.

‡ Diodorus Siculus, lib. v.

§ Diod. Sic. & Marcell. ut sup.

|| Strabo, ut sup. & Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

Female druids,  
and their classes,  
first the Senæ.

Besides these, there were as many classes of religious female votaries, or druidesses;\* of which, the first were those who had vowed perpetual virginity, and dedicated all their time to the services of religion, living retired in loanfome places, sequestered from mankind, and business of public import. These, dwelling together in little parties, or sisterhoods, were much addicted to divination, prophecies, and miracles, so that they gained great respect amongst the common people, by whom they were often consulted. They were called Senæ, which signifies wife, or venerable women.†

The second  
class of female  
druids.

The second class consisted of certain religious females, who were married, but spent the greatest part of their time amongst the druids, assisting in the divine services. At certain times, these were permitted to visit their husbands, and do whatever their domestic duty might require.‡

Third class of  
female druids.

The last class of these females, and the lowest, consisted of such as performed the most servile offices about the temples, the sacrifices, and the persons of the druids. These were not parted from their husbands, but governed their families, brought up their children, and laboured as much at home as became their sex and circumstances, when their attendance was not required by the druids.§

The primate, or  
chief druid, how  
chosen.

These six classes of religious people joined together, formed a large body, over which one chief, or primate, ruled, who is distinguished by the name of arch-druid: || at his death, according to the rules of the druidical religion, the next in merit, knowledge, and judgment, ought to succeed; but this being a post of so much honour, and such extensive power, many were apt to set up their claim, and but few of them disposed to yield the preference to his neighbour. In this case, the matter was to be referred to the votes of the druids; but it often happened, that the losing parties flew from this determination, and spiriting up the temporal princes in their defence, had recourse to arms, and by the sword

\* Borlafs, Stukeley, &c.

† Pomponius Mela speaks of one of these druidical sisterhoods in the following manner: "In an island situate in the British sea, lived nine venerable vestals, who pretended they could raise storms and tempests by their incantations, cure the most inveterate diseases, transform themselves into all kinds of animals, and foresee future events; of this last they made a great advantage, for they answered none but such as visited their island on purpose to consult them; therefore, we may justly suppose, they came not empty handed."—Mela, lib. iii. cap. 6.

‡ Some say, that they were permitted

only once a year to visit their husbands, for the sake of children. Vide Borlafs's History of Cornwall, Stukeley's Stonehenge, &c.

§ Ibid. ibid. & Dr. Henry's History of Britain.

|| The arch-druid is supposed to have resided in great splendour, in Anglesea, where they pretend his seat is yet to be traced out. Rowland's Mona Antiqua. &c. Sammes, and some other authors, make two chief druids, one presiding over the north, the other over the southern parts of Britain: but for this they have no certain authority. Vide Sammes's Britan. Illustrata.

made

made good their claim; and then, according to the chance of war, this honourable post was either gained or lost.\*

Of these druids, many appear to have lived a kind of monastic life, united together in fraternities;† and because the service of each temple required a great number of every class, they all resided near the temple where they served. It is not in the least unlikely, that amongst these religious professors, some may have spent their days in solitude and retirement, living like hermits, apart from mankind, in little huts, or near their temples in the gloomy groves; others again (and of these not a few) spent a far more public life, in the courts of princes, and families of great men; for no sacred rite could be performed, or decisive judgment pronounced, without a druid; their power extended, not only to what regarded their temples and public affairs, but even to the domestic transactions in private houses.‡ As marriage must have been an incumbance to the druidical offices in any of these different kinds of life, it is highly probable that they all lived in a state of celibacy, being waited upon by their female devotees.

To the care of these men was committed the education of the youth; for it was not customary for the son to be seen with his father before he was able to bear arms. No wonder is to be made, that druids should first endeavour to impress upon the minds of their scholars such an awful respect towards them and their order, as might for ever after secure them the ascendancy over their wills; for, impressions thus received in the souls of young people are not easily obliterated, even when their reason becomes more strong, and their judgment more perfect.

The druidical doctrine consisted of two distinct systems; the one only communicated to those who were initiated, and admitted into their own order, and the which they were bound by solemn oaths never to divulge: so careful were they lest their secret instructions should be overheard by unhallowed ears, that they taught their disciples in the most private places, such as the caves of the earth, and the deep recesses of the thickest forests.§ Neither committed|| they any of these important doctrines to writing, lest at any time they should be divulged amongst the common multitude. What this secret doctrine was, cannot be discovered; but a part of it, (as it is thought) and which might exhibit their own private sentiments, was, that after death the souls of men ascended to some higher orb, and enjoyed a more sublime and exalted state of felicity than what they could experience in this world.\*\* But as this opinion was too refined to suit with the low and gross conceptions of the vul-

\* Cæf. Comment. lib. vi.

† Ammian. Marcel.

‡ Cæf. Comment. lib. vi.

§ Pomponius Mela, lib. iii. cap. 2; & Lucan, lib. i.

|| "So jealous (says Strabo) were they

Vol. I.

"of their secret doctrines, that they ne-

"ver communicated them to women, lest

"they should divulge them." lib. iv.

\*\* Lucan, lib. i. v. 455, & infra; &

Ammian. Marcel. lib. xv.

gar in general, it was hid from them; and they were taught a second doctrine, more suitable to the level of their genius; but above all things, in order to make them more brave and intrepid in the defence of their country, their preceptors assured them, that their souls were immortal, and constantly passed, after the death of one body, into another.\*

The learning of the druids.

The druids appear to have been well versed in natural philosophy, and that in most of its branches; and besides their divine offices, they were other ways very useful, as being the only physicians at that time; and their medicines chiefly consisted of herbs and plants, gathered at particular times, with various superstitious rites, which were thought absolutely necessary to render them beneficial. Nor was the learning which was held requisite for them to acquire, easy to be obtained; for their secret and public mythology was so large, that it required at least twenty years to perfect themselves in all its various parts, which was all of it to be learned by heart, and contained in an infinite number of verses.†

The mythology of the druids.

Their mythology, which was very complex, consisted of a vast variety of fables, concerning the genealogy of the gods, their attributes, offices, actions, and the like; as well as of the different methods of appeasing their anger, gaining their favour, and discovering their will; but all abounding with superstitions, wonders, miracles, and portentous signs. These fables, at certain stated times, they delivered to the surrounding multitude, from little eminences, (many of which yet remain)‡ and they added to their discourses, moral precepts, and reflections on their natural duty to each other, exhorting them to live in friendship together, and to fight valiantly in the defence of their country. These speeches, which they made with surprising energy, had a great effect upon the minds of their auditors, and inspired them with a reverential awe towards the gods, an enthusiastic love for their country, an undaunted courage, and a sovereign contempt of death.§

Four kinds of religion amongst the druids.

The religion of the druids was of four kinds, as, songs of praise and thanksgiving, prayers, offerings and sacrifices, and various rites of augury and divination, all of which were performed with many superstitious ceremonies, sometimes in public, and sometimes in private amongst themselves. The nature and order of their religious songs we cannot by any means discover, nor the particular form in which their supplications were made. Of their offerings and divination we have a much clearer light.||

The cruel sacrifices of the druids.

All their offices of religion in general were performed in their sacred groves and temples, which stood near some river, or fountain, conse-

\* Cæs. Comment. lib. vi. Diodorus Siculus, lib. v.

† Ibid. Ibid.

‡ Rowland's *Mona Antiq.*

§ Ibid.

|| Vide Dr. Henry's *History of Britain*, vol. I.

crated to the gods. These hallowed places were surrounded with a circular mound, or bank of earth, to prevent the intrusion of improper persons. Their offerings consisted chiefly of living animals, and such as were the most useful, and fit for food. The druids who selected the victims, always chose such as were the most beautiful, and free from defect or blemish of any kind; for they propagated a belief, that the more noble the offering was, which was presented to the gods, the more attention would be paid by them to the prayers of those who offered. Led on by this delusive argument, their altars streamed with human blood; for, when a man was desirous of obtaining any extraordinary favour or protection from the gods, he would lead another man to the altar, to be sacrificed by the druid: in this manner he thought to appease the immortal deities, and by depriving another of his life, secure his own. For the same cause, when any public calamity of the state demanded a sacrifice, or upon the eve of a dangerous war, their horrid offerings were increased, and that their obdurate deities might be satiated with human blood, an image of wicker was provided, of a prodigious size, and filled with living men, which being set on fire, the miserable wretches within were burnt to death; these victims, it is true, consisted generally of such as had been detected in thefts, or other crimes obnoxious to the law, (with whom they supposed the gods were best pleased;) but when a sufficient number of such could not be found, rather than their sacrifice should be incomplete, the innocent and harmless often suffered.\* All the victims which were to be slain upon the altar, were brought with various ceremonies to the priest, who was to perform that office; and such animals as were fit for food, were divided commonly into three parts, one of which was burnt upon the altar, another belonged to the officiating druid, and the third part to the person who had brought the offering, on which he feasted, accompanied with his friends.

The divination of the druids was of two sorts, either by the flight of Divination of birds, or other casual accidents of like nature; or by the inspection of the druids. the entrails of victims slain in their sacrifices: and to the declarations of the druids on these times, the people yielded an implicit faith. But when great occasions required the consultation of the deities, a man was made the victim, and slain by the priest with one blow of a sword, struck above the diaphragm: by observing the posture in which he fell, his different convulsions, and the direction of the blood which flowed from his wound, they made their predictions, according to certain rules, that were left them by their ancestors.†

Superstitious parade, and great variety of foolish ceremonies, were Various superstitious customs of the druids. used by the druids in the most trifling actions; but at certain stated periods, and annual feasts, some more particular solemnities were re-

\* Cæf. Comment. lib. vi. cap. 15. & † Diodorus Siculus, lib. v. Strabo, lib. iv.

quired; as in cutting the mistletoe from the oak,\* which was done as near as the age of the moon would permit them, to the tenth of March, (their new-year's day) in the following manner: first, they observed that the moon was six days old, then having the sacrifice prepared under the tree, two milk-white bullocks were brought forth, whose horns were then, and not till then, bound up; this done, the chief druid, habited in a white vesture, ascended the tree, and with a golden pruning knife cut off the mistletoe, which was carefully received into a white woollen cloth by them who attended below, and over it many orations and incantations were uttered; after this, they began to offer sacrifices, and pray to the gods, that they would give a blessing, with their own gift, to those who were honoured with it; the mistletoe thus hallowed, was carefully kept, and the decoction of which they esteemed as an antidote to poison, a sure remedy for barrenness, and a certain cure for many other bodily diseases.†

Ceremonies in gathering the herb Samolus.

Again, the druids had an herb, named Samolus, in great esteem amongst them: this herb grew chiefly in damp places, and in gathering it three things were to be closely attended to; first, that the person should be fasting; secondly, to be careful that he did not look back whilst he gathered it; and lastly, that he should do all with his left hand. When he was thus possessed of it, he laid it into the troughs and cisterns where swine or oxen were wont to drink; and such were its virtues, (especially if it was bruised a little) that the cattle which partook of that water should be effectually preserved from all diseases.‡

A festival dedicated to the sun.

On the first of May, which day was dedicated to Belinus, or the Sun, they held an annual festival, and kindled prodigious fires in all their sacred places, and performed sacrifices, with many other solemnities.§ At these public feasts the whole community of Britons attended, as well as their wives and children, all of them naked, and stained over with some certain composition, so that they appeared like Ethiopians.||

Other festivals, and their causes.

It is thought, that at midsummer, and again early in November, other annual festivals were held; on the first, the people assembled to implore the friendly influence of Heaven on their fields and pastures; on the latter, they came to return thanks for the favourable seasons, and the increase with which the gods had blessed their labours; and besides this, to pay their yearly contributions to the druids, who were always ready to receive them.\*\*

\* The oak was held in great veneration amongst the druids; their religious rites were performed in groves of oak. Maximus Tyrius says, that the Celts worshipped Jupiter, of whom they made the tallest oak to be the resemblance. But the oak was held still more sacred when any thing was found growing upon it, (mistletoe especially) for then it was thought the gods

themselves had chosen that tree. Vide the Manners and Customs, &c. of the Inhabitants of England. Vol. I. page 11.

† Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. cap. 44.

‡ Ibid. lib. xxiv. cap. 11.

§ Toland's Hist. of the Druids, fol. 74.

Mem. Acad. Royal. vol. XIX. p. 489.

|| Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxii. cap. 1.

\*\* Toland's Hist. of the Druids, fol. 69.



The honour that was paid to the druids, and their seclusion from the labours and troubles of the world, prevailed upon many to enter into their order;\* and perhaps more would have taken the same step, had not the study and application which was necessary for them to go through to make them adepts in the druidical system, deterred them. The common people were far from being displeased at the increasing numbers of these priests; for they were persuaded, that, as they became more numerous, the more plentiful their harvest would be;† because the gods, for the sake of their ministers, would not fail to provide for the rest of the people.

The great number of the druids a cause of fruitfulness in the land.

So much had the religious juggles of the druids prevailed upon the minds of men, that they were sure to obtain respect, through fear, if not for love; and this was done in great measure by their pretensions to the art of magic, and their declaring themselves able to call in spiritual aids to assist them, and revenge their cause; besides, all their religious ceremonies were so grave and solemn, that they raised a fearful awe in the minds of their beholders, so that they were easily convinced when the druids asserted their power, and proceeded to threaten them. These delusions did not only astonish the uncultivated Britons, but even the Romans themselves; and it was declared, that the druids of Gaul and Britain seemed equal in knowledge with the Persians, in that diabolical art of magic.‡ Nor shall we much wonder at their being able to play upon the minds of their votaries, when we consider, that all the learning of their time was confined amongst themselves; and though, indeed, the chief part of their office was to learn their theological verses by heart, yet they were by no means ignorant of letters; for all public affairs and private accounts were committed to writing.§

The druids famous for their skill in magic.

Now we have seen the power and authority of the druids, and been witnesses of the great ascendancy which they had gained over the minds of the deluded Britons, can we doubt of their opulence? and though we are unable to discover the real extent of their revenues, yet we may conclude they were as great as the people could afford. In the first place,

The revenues of the druids.

\* Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. vi. cap. 13.

† Strabo, lib. iv.

‡ Pliny, lib. xxx. cap. 1.

§ “Quum in reliquis ferè rebus publicis, privatisque rationibus, Græcis literis utantur,” are the very words of Cæsar; concerning which passage I find an excellent note in the additions to Camden, where the author justly says, “But we must not from hence conclude that the druids had any knowledge of the Greek tongue, for Cæsar himself, when he writ to Q. Cicero (besieged at that time somewhere amongst the Nervians) penned his letter in Greek, (Vide Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 40) left it should have

“been intercepted, and so give intelligence to the enemy; which would have been but a poor project, if the druids (who were the great ministers of the state) had been masters of that language. The learned Selden is of opinion, that the word Græcis has crept into the copies, and is no part of the original; and it was natural enough for Cæsar, in his observations of the difference between their discipline and their other affairs, to say in general, that in the one they made use of letters, and not in the other, without specifying particulars.” Note to Camden in Introduction.

they

they seem to have had the superiority over certain islands, if not the whole profit of them; as of Anglesea, Man, &c. besides these, it is far from being improbable, but that they might have considerable possessions on the continent of Britain, near to their temples. When an army returned victorious, the most precious parts of the spoils were offered to the gods; and these were conveyed by the druids into the sacred groves, where they were laid up by the side of the temple, or near some consecrated lake, without any other guard set over them than the terrors of religion.\* But although the common people were not hardy enough to touch these sacred treasures, the priests, who were the ministers of the gods, would scarcely be so scrupulous as not to convert them to their own use, if necessity required. Again, they were well paid when consulted by private persons, concerning the success of intended enterprizes. Besides their profits were great derived from the administration of justice, their practice of physic, teaching the sciences, and the rewards for those instructed in their theology; especially from such as were rich, and came from abroad: for the British druids best understood the secret mysteries relative to their doctrine; and it was by no means uncommon for many to come over hither from Gaul, to be better instructed in the more occult and difficult parts of their profession;† and these (it is highly probable) seldom came empty handed.

Annual tribute  
due to the druids,  
and for what.

A tradition is also mentioned by some authors, that the druids exacted certain annual dues, (but to what amount is not specified;) in particular, on the last evening of October, all families of every degree were obliged to extinguish their fires, and attend the several temples with a stipulated payment, in consideration of which, on the first day of November they were to receive some fire from the sacred altars, to re-kindle those in their own houses; and this payment was exacted under pain of excommunication; and all such were deprived of the use of fire during all the cold season, when it was most wanted; and if any of their friends or neighbours supplied them with this necessary article, they also were excommunicated.‡ These, and such like sources, had the druids to raise wealth; and when we consider the advantages of them all, we shall presently conclude that they were very opulent.

The gods worshipped  
by the  
Britons.

The deities which were worshipped by the Gauls and Britons, appear to have been very numerous. The Supreme Being they adored under the name of Hesus; they paid their court to him (with cruel rites) when they went forth to battle, because from his favour they expected the victory. Tutates is not supposed by some modern authors to have been another god, but only a different name of the former, for by this word is signified "God, the parent, or creator,"§ which appellation can belong to none

\* Cas. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

† Ibid.

‡ Toland's Hist. of the Druids, page 71, 72, & Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. I.

§ Tutates is derived from *Deu-Tatt*, British words, which signify *God, the parent, or creator*. Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I. lib. i. cap. 2.

but

but the Supreme Being. When these nations sunk into idolatry, they degraded Tutates into the sovereign of the infernal world, and made him the same with Dis of the Greeks and Romans, or (as others think) with Mercury; and they worshipped him in such a cruel and bloody manner, as could only be agreeable to an infernal power.

Taranis, another deity, so called from Taran, thunder, over which he was said to preside.\*

The sun was worshipped by the Britons under many various appellations, as Bel, Belinus, Belatucardus, &c. all which names, in their language, were expressive of the nature and property of that glorious luminary.

After the sun, the moon, the lesser light of Heaven, is supposed to have held its estimation.

Besides these, which without doubt form but a very small part of the number of their deities, they had female divinities, or goddesses; as Andraсте, thought to be the same with Venus, or Diana: Onvana, Minerva, Ceres, Proserpine, &c. In short, they are accused of having so many idol gods, and addicted to so many superstitious ceremonies, that their idolatry exceeded even that of the Egyptians.† Hardly a lake, a wood, a fountain, or hallowed hill, but what had its titular deity, or genius, residing in it, and to each of which, no doubt, some particular worship was assigned.

The druidical religion was in the zenith of its glory at the time of Julius Cæsar's arrival; but as the Romans proceeded in their conquests, the druids, who were not only religious officiators, but judges and directors in all civil affairs, foreseeing the downfall of their power and consequence, were continually stirring up the people against their conquerors, and fomenting rebellions. The Romans soon found it impossible to reconcile the minds of the people they had overcome to the yoke which they were laying upon them, whilst these crafty priests held their extensive authority; for this cause they were determined to suppress their power, as the only means left them to advance their own. All their subjects in the conquered provinces of Gaul and Britain they obliged to build temples, and sacrifice after the Roman fashion, strictly prohibiting all offerings of human creatures. The druids were also deprived of their authority in civil affairs, and punished with the utmost severity when concerned in any revolt. By these means their power was brought so low in the reign of Claudius, the Roman emperor, about the year of

\* Concerning these deities, take the following verses from Lucan, lib. i.

"Et quibus immitis placatur sanguine diro

"Tutates, horensque feris altaribus Hesus,

"Et Taranis Scythicæ non mitior ara Diana."

Thus Englished in the addition to Camden:

"And those vile wretches that with human blood

"Tutates' and fierce Hesus' altars load;

"And barbarous Taranis, his shrine that vies

"With curs'd Diana's Scythian cruelties."

† Gildas Historia.

our Lord 45, that they were no longer looked upon as people of any consequence throughout all Gaul.\* About the same time also they began to feel the rigour of the Roman government in the south-east parts of Britain, from whence many of them retired to Anglesea, a kind of little dominion of their own; but here they were pursued by Paulus Suetonius, who, in the year 61, invaded that island, which had afforded a constant asylum for all who were disaffected to the Romans, and plotting against their government. In order to root them from their secret retreats, Paulinus destroyed their sacred groves, overturned their altars, and burnt the druids in their own fires.† So many of these wretched priests perished at this time, and in the unfortunate revolt of the Britons under Boudicea, that they never afterwards made any considerable figure in the southern parts of Britain. Such of them as would not submit to the impositions of the Romans, and renounce their own authority, fled into Caledonia, Ireland, and the smaller British islands, where they supported their declining power some short time longer.

But such strong traces had their superstition left in the minds of the infatuated multitude, that they baffled not only the efforts of the Romans, but even the superior lights of the gospel to remove; nor were they finally erased for a long time after. On this occasion we meet with so many edicts of the emperors, and canons of the councils, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, against the worship of the sun, the moon, mountains, lakes, trees, &c.‡

\* Suetonius in Vita Claud.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 3.

‡ Even in the days of king Canute, the Dane, the following law was found necessary to be made: "We strictly charge and

" forbid all our subjects to worship the  
" gods of the gentiles; that is to say, the  
" sun, moon, fires, rivers, fountains, hills,  
" trees, or woods of any kind, &c." Leges  
Canuti, cap. 5.

## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T III.

## C H A P. II.

*The Ecclesiastical History of the Britons from their Conversion to Christianity,  
to the Arrival of the Saxons.*

**A**MONGST those things which cannot absolutely be set down in the Cent. I. affirmative, none appears more certain, than that the enlivening ray of gospel light first shone upon this island some time between the years of our Lord 43 and 61; for the period seems to be fixed by the records of antiquity as not long before the great defeat of the Britons, under the conduct of their hapless queen, Boudicea, which happened about the year 61:\* but at this early period the doctrine of Christianity could not be supposed to have greatly prevailed; it was not only confined to the southern parts of Britain, but very likely to particular families, who might exercise their devotions in the greatest privacy, and without the least stir or noise. In the days of Nero, when persecutions raged hotly upon the continent against the professors of the gospel, it is very probable, many, to avoid the cruelty of that wicked emperor, fled over into Britain, and took shelter here, so that the number of Christians was greatly increased. From this time (we may suppose) they began to form religious societies, under spiritual guides, for the instruction of mankind, and the regulation of their manners, and now first assumed the face and form of a Christian church.

Concerning the conversion of the Britons to Christianity:—by whom this glorious work was begun, or how at first effected, cannot at this time be traced out; unhappily all ancient and authentic records are silent on these heads; if ever any accounts of this important transaction were set

When the Britons were first converted.

The uncertainty of the person by whom the Britons were converted.

\* Stillfleet's Orig. Brit. chap. 1. & vide Gildæ Epist. cap. 6.

Cent. I. down by the primitive Christian Britons, they were soon destroyed, or lost in the fatal discords and unfortunate wars which followed, so that none of them have been transmitted to posterity. The fables concerning Joseph of Arimathea's coming hither, and preaching the gospel, are now exploded, as the idle inventions of the monks of Glastonbury, to give a greater air of consequence to their monastery. Setting all such tales aside, we have only to add, that it would be absurd to declare positively to whom the Britons owed their first knowledge of the divine truths, or that any one of the apostles came hither and instructed them; yet thus much may, and ought to be said, if it was the work at all of an apostle, none was so likely to have been the man as St. Paul, whose extensive travels, and abundant labours, may greatly tend to strengthen this conjecture; which is confirmed besides by a great variety of plausible arguments drawn from the writings of the primitive fathers.\*

The Romans, without any such design, aid the propagation of the gospel.

The Christian religion thus early introduced, began to diffuse its light from one of the British nations to another, until they had all of them in some degree felt its powerful influence. The conquering Romans themselves, though without their knowledge or intention, contributed not a little to the advancement of Christianity; for by reducing all the different states of the southern Britons under one government, a free intercourse was kept up over the whole country, and by this means their religious opinions were communicated with the greater ease, and the gospel doctrine spread abroad much sooner than it would otherwise have been. As the Romans completed their conquests before the end of the first century, we may reasonably suppose, that some faint light (at least) of Christianity was received in each particular state by the beginning of the second. Another principal cause of the early progress of the Christian religion, (which was also owing to the Romans) was the destruction of the druids; for when they were removed, and their pernicious doctrines erased from the minds of the people, they were left more open to conviction, and better prepared to receive an impression from a more pure and rational worship.†

Cent. II. During the second century, the gospel knowledge seems to have continued increasing, and that in its original purity, untainted by any of those heresies which were broached on the continent. Great parade is made by the monkish historians of Lucius, a king of Britain, under whose special favour the Christian church began to flourish, protected by the civil power, and was formed into a regular and proper government, supported by bishops and archbishops, who were appointed to preside over all things relative to religion. The conversion of this king they place about the year of our Lord 167, and they represent him as a great

The British religion not yet tainted with heresies.

\* Stillingfleet, ut sup.

† Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I. cap. ii. sect. 2.

prince, ruling over many states,\* and absolute in his dominions : but to any one who will peruse the history of this period, and at the same time recollect, that all the southern parts of Britain were under the government of the Romans, this romantic fable will presently appear in its proper colours. If there ever were any grounds at all for the story, this Lucius (at most) could have been no more than a petty prince, or chieftain of the Britons, who might be living about this time, and by the favour of the Romans indulged with some degree of authority amongst his people ; he may have embraced Christianity, and promoted the conversion of his friends and followers as much as lay in his power.† Cent. II.

Although the gospel doctrine made not that very rapid progress which the monks so confidently affirm it did, yet it continued to flourish in Britain, and every day gained ground in the hearts of the inhabitants ; for very early in the beginning of the third century it had extended beyond the bounds of the Roman province into the north, and advanced gradually into those parts of the island which had not submitted to the Roman arms ; and this was most probably effected by some provincial Britons who were animated with a true Christian zeal, and desirous of communicating their new faith to their neighbours. From the present period to the very latter end of this century, we have nothing authentic recorded concerning the state and progress of the Christian religion ; but about that time the persecution under Dioclesian breaking out, the Britons, amongst the rest who professed the true faith, had their share in the cruelties which were then put in force by the command of that emperor. Cent. III.

The exact time of this persecution in Britain, as well as the particular circumstances attending it, are not to be discovered.‡ Our own monkish writers, (it is true) who never fail to lard their religious histories with miraculous events, have said a great deal upon the subject, but

The progress of the Christian faith.

The persecution of the Christians.

\* Nennii Hist. Brit. cap. 18. Galfrid Moumouth, &c.

† But even this is doubtful, because Gildas, the most ancient of our historians, makes no mention of king Lucius, though he was himself a Briton, and a zealous Christian. However, bishop Usher, and after him, bishop Stillingfleet, are of the opinion here adopted ; and Usher, to prove the real existence of Lucius, mentions two coins found, one in gold, another in silver, inscribed with these letters, LUC. Usher de primord. p. 39 & 40. & Stillingfleet's Origines Britannicæ, fol. 62.

‡ In what year it began, or how long it continued, cannot be discovered. Gildas, the most ancient historian, says, it continued nine years in other countries, and but two in Britain, and seems to inti-

mate it was the two last years of Dioclesian, (we may recollect this emperor assumed the purple, A. D. 284, and laid it aside, A. D. 305.) The old church histories also agree with Gildas, and represent this persecution as raging with the greatest violence in the beginning of the fourth century. But the venerable Bede, and a great number of our own ancient authors, place it and the martyrdom of St. Alban, in the year 286. If Dioclesian, or his colleague, Maximianus, had any hand in this persecution, it must have been either near the beginning, or the end, of their joint reign ; for, in the intermediate time Britain was governed more than ten years, first by Carausius, and after by Allectus, in a manner quite independent of those emperors. Vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit.

Cent. III. in such a stile as plainly indicates the air of romance. However, the truth, deprived of its fabulous ornaments, seems to be as follows:— That at the very close of the third century, or the commencement of the fourth, the British Christians throughout all the southern parts of the island, were persecuted with great rigour, on account of their religion. Amongst the number of pious men who distinguished themselves on this occasion, and suffered death in the cause of Christ, St. Alban (a native of Verulam) was the first; after him, two others, named Aaron and Julius, citizens of Caerleon; yet, though these are the only names that remain to posterity, they were not the only Britons who resisted the repeated endeavours of their persecutors, and continued faithful even unto death. Many more, as well men as women, in various parts of the Roman province, shared the same fate, and became martyrs in a cause so truly laudable.\* But, unhappily, authentic materials are wanting, by which we might be able to trace out any further particulars relative to this important period.

The church doctrine at this period.

It is impossible to give a satisfactory and authentic account of the government, doctrine, and worship, of the British church, during the first three centuries; yet there is the greatest reason to believe, that in their rites and ceremonies they did not differ much from the other churches of the same time, and that they had not any customs very singular. In keeping of Easter, indeed, they rather imitated the churches of Asia, than that of Rome.† As to their doctrine, it was probably the same in substance with the apostles' creed; for we have undoubted authority, that they were not tainted with heresy until they received that of Arius.‡

Cent. IV. Early in the fourth century, a stop was put to the persecution of the Christian church; for, in the year of our Lord 305, Dioclesian and Maximianus resigned their state, and Constantius Chlorus, being in Britain, was declared emperor; and though, before this time, he was obliged in compliance with the edicts of the two emperors, to permit the persecution to go on, yet no sooner had he himself assumed the imperial authority, than he put an end to the sufferings of the distressed Christians, and restored them to their former privileges. This prince died at York, in the year 306, and was succeeded by his son, Constantine the Great, who entirely freed the Christian church from all oppression. We have, indeed, no reason to suppose that Constantine himself was a Christian when he first assumed the purple: yet it is very certain, that before he left Britain, he determined to take the Christians under his special protection, and shew them greater favour than his father had done. Under the favourable auspices of this prince, the British Christians, who had

The church protected by Constantius, and his son, Constantine the Great.

\* Gildas, Bede, &c.

† See King's Enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Primitive Church, part II.

‡ Dr. Henry, ut sup. Gildas & Bede, vol. I. cap. ii. sect. 2.



fled from the face of persecution and cruelty, came from their lurking places, where they had hid themselves, and applied themselves to rebuild their ruined churches, beginning again their sacred ceremonies with joyful hearts.\* Cent. IV.

Hitherto the Christian church had not enjoyed the protection of the state, so that their councils, or synods, were held in the most private manner, and consequently the transactions of those councils are but little known; but as soon as Constantine began to declare more openly in the favour of their religion, these assemblies became more frequent and important; being often called by the emperor himself, they were sometimes honoured with his presence, and their decrees enforced and executed by his authority. The church protected by the state.

At the first council called by Constantine, which was held at Arles, in the year of our Lord 314, there were three of the British bishops present, as Eborus, bishop of York, Restitius, bishop of London, and Adelfius, the third bishop;† together with Sacerdos, a presbyter, and Arminius, a deacon, from the same city with the last bishop. This council, which was not very numerous, consisted only of thirty-three bishops, and a still smaller number of presbyters and deacons, who were summoned as representatives of all the clergy out of the western empire. Four of these bishops came out of the province of Gaul, called Vienne, of which Arles was the capital, but only one out of every other province; and as there was then but three Roman provinces in Britain, three bishops were its full complement. And hence we see the consequence of the British church at this period; that it was viewed in the same light with those of the other provinces of the Romans, and treated on the same footing.‡ The state of the British church.

Constantine was very liberal to the Christian clergy, but at the same time he was careful to grant them no favour which could affect or hurt the community in general. By a public edict, he exempted them from all military duty, as well as any other burthensome service, that they might have full leisure to pursue their studies, and improve themselves in religious knowledge. By another edict, he gave the goods and possessions of such of the late martyrs as had died without heirs, to the church. These were great encouragements to the clergy: but he added besides another edict, of greater advantage to them than either of the former; this was published at Rome, the third day of July, in the year 322; by this he gave full liberty for all persons of what state or degree soever, to make their last wills in favour of the clergy, and grant them as large a proportion of their estates and goods as they should think proper: by this means, in opulent places, the clergy were soon enriched.§ The edicts of Constantine in favour of the church.

\* Euseb. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 13.

† In the original *Adelfius de Civitate Colonia Londinensium*. Many opinions have been started concerning this city, and where it could stand. Vide Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. cap. 2. Dr. Henry says, per-

haps it should be *Colonia Lindum*, i. e. Lincoln, and this appears to be most likely.

‡ Stillingfleet, cap. 2.

§ Cod. Theod. lib. xvi. cap. 2. Euseb. lib. x. cap. 7. Zosimen, lib. i. cap. 9. & Vita Constant. lib. ii. cap. 36.

Cent. IV. In Britain, indeed, where the inhabitants were very poor, these contributions could not be so considerable; of this ourselves may judge, for thirty-seven years after this edict was published, a council was called by Constantius, which was held at Ariminum, and the emperor freely offered to maintain all the clergy at the public charge; his offer was not accepted by any, those three bishops excepted, who came from Britain, who not being able to maintain themselves, chose rather to receive the emperor's gift than be a charge to their brethren. Hence it plainly appears, that the greater part of the bishops had in so small a space of time been raised to a state of independency.

The fatality of  
the Arian heresy.

The church was no sooner delivered from external oppression, but unhappy differences were fomented within itself, and its concord broken by internal dissensions. Amongst these, few were more fatal than the controversies between Arius, a presbyter of the church of Alexandria, and Alexander, a bishop of the same city, concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ. This dispute confused, and destroyed, the peace of the church in almost every corner. How soon the heretical opinions of Arius reached Britain cannot positively be asserted, nor can we know what progress it might make here during this century; for in this point authors have greatly differed, some accusing the Britons very heavily, and others again as assiduously endeavouring to exculpate, and clear their characters.\* The Arian heresy made but little progress during the reigns of Constantine, and his elder son, Constans, for his opinions were severely censured, and condemned in the council of Nice, held in the year of our Lord 325. But Constantius, the second son of Constantine, who succeeded his brother Constans in the government of the western empire, (being himself a favourer of the Arian party) called a council at Ariminum, in the year 359, at which time there were almost all the bishops of the western empire assembled, to the number of four hundred; and amongst others, those of Britain signed

\* Gildas seems to intimate, that the Arian heresy made a great progress in this island soon after its first appearance; for having described the happy state of the British church some time after the end of the persecution, he proceeds in this manner: "This sweet concord between Christ, the head, and his members, continued until the Arian perfidy appeared; and like an enraged serpent, pouring in upon us its foreign poison, inflamed brethren and countrymen with the most cruel hatred. And a passage being thus made over the ocean, every other wild beast who carried the venom of any heresy in his horrid mouth, easily instilled it into the people of this country, who are ever unsettled in their opinions, and al-

"ways fond of hearing something new." But Gildas is here thought to be too severe upon the British clergy: the opinions of Arius were condemned at the council of Nice, where, it is thought, the British bishops were present. Also, St. Athanasius, and the bishops assembled at Antioch, in council, assure the emperor Jovian, in their letter to him, that the bishops of Spain, Gaul, and Britain, continued to adhere to the faith of the council of Nice, of which they had been informed by letters from those bishops. Both St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom speak often of the orthodoxy of the British church in their writings. Gild. Hist. cap. 9. Athan. Oper. tom. I. page 399. Hieron. ad Evag. ad Marcell. Christ. tom. II. page 696, &c.

a creed,

a creed, differing in some few points from that of the council of Cent. IV. Nice.\* But yet this appears to have been the effect of mere force, for at the beginning of the council, they unanimously declared their approbation of the Nicæan creed, and pronounced anathemas against the errors of Arius; and after their return to their respective dioceses, renounced their involuntary subscriptions as soon as they could do it with safety.

Whatever the doctrine of the British church might be at this period, there is certainly no evidence that they were subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, or any other foreign bishop. The British clergy are thought to have differed from those of Gaul, and still more from those of Italy, in their religious worship; but they had not yet departed from the simplicity of the gospel.†

As the Christian clergy in general grew more opulent, they manifested a mistaken zeal, and began to add new ceremonies to their religious worship, and even to adopt some of the Pagan rites, with trifling alterations; their churches, and places of religious meetings; were adorned with pictures of saints and martyrs, in imitation of the idol temples of the heathens; the clergy performed their sacred offices in great variety of habits, not much unlike the Pagan priests; fasts, festivals, and holidays were multiplied, and many ceremonious injunctions enforced. The clergy used these fatal imitations of the heathen rites, partly out of their natural love of pomp, and partly in hopes by such means to allure the unconverted Heathens to the worship of the true God;‡ but however good the primitive intention may have been, these innovations were in the end productive of the most unfortunate and destructive consequences. How far the British clergy followed the general example of the other Christians, cannot be determined; yet we find it certain, that they were not without their share of the superstition, which began at this time to prevail, as the supposing that certain places were more holy than others, and making a virtue of going on pilgrimage in order to visit them: we find the Britons so far inflated with this zeal, that they made journeys as far as Jerusalem, to behold the place where Christ suffered;§ others again, still more extravagant, travelled even into Syria, only to have a sight of the famous self-tormentor, Simon Stylites, who lived fifty-six years upon the top of a high pillar.||

In this century, a new order of ecclesiastics made their appearance in the world; these were the monks, or regular clergy, who in after times made such a considerable figure in the Christian church. In Egypt they had their origin; for many of the Christians who fled from the persecution of Dioclesian, took refuge in those parts, and lived in the deserts

The British church at this period under no subjection to foreign bishops.

Innovations in the ceremonies, &c. of the church.

The first beginning of the monastic life.

\* Dupin. Eccles. Hist. cent. IV. vol. II. iv. page 175.

page 263.

† Stillfleet, chap. iii.

‡ Mosheim, Hist. Ecc. Sæcul. IV. cap.

§ Hieron. tom. I. epist. xvii.

|| Theod. Philotheus, cap. 36.

Cent. IV. and retired places, in an abstemious and solitary manner. Amongst the rest, St. Anthony (the father of the monastic life) was much famed for his sanctity; great numbers flocked to him from all quarters, and these, in the beginning of this century, he formed into religious fraternities, and every company was placed in a separate habitation, and at a distance from each other; to all of these he delivered out special rules and directions for their behaviour. St. Pachomius and Hilarion, two admirers of St. Anthony, soon after following his example, founded monasteries in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria,\* so that these religious brotherhoods abounded in the east; and the same zealous spirit (penetrating into Europe about the middle of this century) in a little time prevailed as much in the west as it had done in the east.

Incredible accounts of the monasteries in Britain.

It is not easy to discover the exact time that the monastic life was introduced into Britain, or to what degree it prevailed at this time. The accounts, as given by the monks of the middle ages, of monasteries in the days of king Lucius, are false and extravagant to the greatest degree; nor are all the stories of the monks of Banchor to be implicitly believed;† not but that it is highly probable there were monasteries in Britain at the end of this century, and particularly one at Banchor, which was afterwards very famous, but it does by no means seem likely, that, in this early period, it should have attained to that splendour and greatness which the monkish historians would have us believe. One observation may be made, on the difference between the British monks of Banchor, and those who succeeded them; the former supported themselves in a frugal manner by their own labours, some alternately working, whilst others performed the religious offices; but the latter were maintained in sloth and idleness by the mistaken charities, and profuse donations of the kings, nobles, and other wealthy men.‡

Cent. V. In the beginning of the fifth century, one Pelagius, said to have been a native of Britain,§ published a very dangerous heresy, which not only disturbed the peace of the British church, but spread its infection abroad over the whole continent, as well to the east as to the west. Amongst the Britons, the opinions of this man greatly prevailed; owing, perhaps, in some measure, to his being their countryman. The most important, and plausible part of the doctrines of Pelagius, were these:—That Adam was naturally mortal, and would have died if he had not sinned: that Adam's sin only affected himself, and not his posterity; that children at their birth are as pure and innocent as Adam was at his first creation; and that the grace of God is not necessary to enable men to overcome temptation, perform their duty, or even attain perfection;

The Pelagian heresy in Britain.

\* Acta Sanctorum, tom. II. p. 107.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist.

‡ Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. I. cap. ii. sect. 2.

§ Bede, lib. i. cap. 10.

but they might do all these things by the freedom of their own wills, and Cent. V.  
the exertion of their own natural abilities.\*

The opinions of Pelagius, so soothing to the pride of men, were propagated here in Britain with great success, by some of his disciples, headed by one Agricola; for the arch heretic himself, with Celestus, a Scottman, and Julianus, of Campania, his other principal followers, were employed in the same work at Rome, and other places. This heresy made such a rapid progress amongst the British clergy, that the true believers found themselves unable to resist its course; therefore they sent over into Gaul for assistance, the matter being there debated in council; they deputed Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus, bishop of Troyes, to undertake this commission, which they did with joy; and being arrived in Britain, they instantly set about the work for which they came, preaching sometimes in the churches, and sometimes in the open fields and highways, with such success, that their fame was presently spread all over the island: those who were wavering they confirmed in the true faith, and reclaimed many who had adopted the heretical errors. The Pelagian champions at first declined the meeting, and arguing with the bishops, but seeing their reputation daily lose ground, and being fearful of losing all their authority, they challenged their opponents to a public disputation, which was joyfully accepted by the bishops; and at the time appointed both parties met, attended on either side by a prodigious multitude of people. The heretics were gaudily habited, and came proudly into the field, as if confident of carrying their point; whilst on the other hand, the two bishops were plain in their attire, and humble in their deportment. The contest was opened by the Pelagian party, who made various long specious arguments, containing no solid matter, nor tending to any conviction; when they had finished, the bishops stood up, and with irresistible proofs, drawn from the sacred scriptures, amazed and confounded their opponents, and convinced their hearers of the truth of their assertions. The surrounding multitude with shouts expressed their joy, and it was with great difficulty that they were hindered from destroying the baffled heretics. This interesting victory over the opponents of the scripture truths, opened the eyes of the people in general, and they returned to their former faith. The bishops having thus happily completed the work for which they came, tarried some short time longer, to confirm the converts in their present opinion, and after they returned to Gaul.†

But although the Pelagian champions had been silenced, or intimidated by the bishops, yet they were not convinced of their errors; for as soon as their antagonists had left the kingdom, they began afresh to propagate their doctrines, and with such great success, that the clergy who

The expedition  
of Germanus  
and Lupus in  
Britain.

Germanus  
comes over into  
Britain a second  
time.

\* Uffer. Primord. p. 218. Concil. Lab. vol. I. chap. ii.  
tom. II. & vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. † Bede, lib. i. cap. 17, &c.

Cent. V. still continued constant in their faith, were obliged to send into Gaul, and beg the assistance of Germanus a second time; he obeyed the invitation, and came again into Britain, accompanied with Severus, bishop of Treves, a disciple of the former Lupus. On their arrival, the two bishops found (to their great satisfaction) that the falling off from the true belief had not been so great as was reported; however, they presently applied themselves with the greatest zeal to accomplish the design of their mission. They preached to the people with great eloquence, and thereby reclaimed such as were apostatized, and confirmed others who before seemed irresolute in their determinations. Having proceeded thus far, and convinced the multitude of their errors, they procured the banishment of the chief Pelagians from the island, and by these means the true faith being happily restored, it remained inviolated for a considerable time.\*

\* Bede, lib. i. cap. 21. & Constant, monk of Auxerre, in Vita German. Epist. Here we may observe, that some disputes have been made concerning the time of the coming of Germanus; but it appears to be morally certain, that it must have been

sometime between the departure of the Romans and the arrival of the Saxons; for Germanus was made bishop of Auxerre, A. D. 418, a few years after the Romans had left the island, and he died A. D. 448, one year before the arrival of the Saxons.

END OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE BRITONS.

# CHRONICLE

## OF

# ENGLAND.

### PART III.

#### CHAP. III.

##### *The ancient Religion of the Saxons.*

**B**EFORE we proceed to give an account of the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, (for this event happened a considerable time after their arrival in Britain) it may be thought highly proper to say something concerning their ancient religion; but at present, it is proposed only to trace the outlines, because a much more perfect picture of their mythology must necessarily follow hereafter, when we shall treat upon the manners and customs of the ancient Danes; who, as they were originally from the same stock, may be justly thought to agree with them in their ideas of religion, and mode of worship. It may, perhaps, be unnecessary to add, that those valiant Germans who came over into Britain, and first established the heptarchy, were all of them Pagans; for this is a fact so well known, that few can be ignorant of it.

It is impossible to give so perfect an account of the priests of the ancient Germans, as we have done of the druids; nor can we positively assert that they were, like them, divided into different classes, according to their several offices or degrees. In the celebrated temple at Upsal, dedicated to the three chief deities, Odin, Frigga, and Thor, each of these deities had his respective priests, the principal of whom, to the number of twelve, presided over the sacrifices, and exercised an unlimited authority over every thing which seemed to have any connection with religion.\* Like other Pagan nations, the ancient Germans had priestesses, whose office it was to officiate in the temples of their female

The religion of the ancient Saxons passed over hastily, and why.

The priests of the ancient Saxons.

\* Northern Antiq. cap. 7.

deities ; and Frigga, their chief goddess, for her greater honour, was served by the daughters of kings, and other ladies of the highest rank in that country.\*

The names of  
the priests, and  
their office.

The priests were generally named drottes, but they were also frequently styled prophets, wise men, and divine men. Yet notwithstanding these appearances of respect and honour, they seem by no means to have been equal, either in power or consequence, to the druids ; nor do we find that they had any such share in the civil or military government, so as to direct the actions of their kings or governors. Besides, as the Germans were not so bigotted to their religion as the Britons, it seems a natural consequence that their priests should not be so opulent.† The power of inflicting penalties, of beating and binding delinquents, was solely vested in the priests ;‡ this was chiefly performed by such as served the god of war, and attended upon the armies. The priests were prohibited appearing in arms, and strictly forbidden to mount on horseback.§ The priestesses were held in the highest respect ; they were distinguished by the exalted titles of prophetesses and goddesses ; they devoted themselves to perpetual virginity, and one part of their office was to keep up the sacred fire, which burnt upon the altars of the deities they served. Those, in particular, at the temple of Upsal, used to deliver out oracles, and were consulted on all important occasions.||

The religious  
opinion of the  
ancient Saxons.

The religious opinions of the northern nations, in former ages, were just and equitable ; for even amidst their grossest idolatry, they still retained some faint idea of the Supreme Being : but by degrees their minds were clouded with error, the ancient simplicity of their worship was lost, and their mythology crouded with wonderful fables, setting forth, in an extravagant manner, the actions of their gods. In these fables we meet with the truest portraits of the people themselves ; for it has been always customary with barbarous nations, to make their deities think and act according to their own passions ; so that it is no wonder that a race of men like the Germans, bred up in hardness and love of war, should make their gods delight in the same. What can be more striking, or more picturesque of the genius of this warlike race, than the descriptions left us of their future state ? When the soul of a warrior was

\* Northern Antiq. cap 7.

† This opinion seems to be confirmed by the speech which Coifi, the Pagan bishop, made to Edwine, king of Northumberland, who therein declares publicly, " That the gods whom they adored had not power to reward their votaries ; for (adds he) none of the people of your realm have served the gods with more unwearied assiduity than myself, yet have I not reaped such reward as many

" who have not obeyed them with half my zeal. If these gods had the power to reward those that serve them, would they not have exerted themselves in my favour, who have performed my duty towards them so faithfully ?" Bede, Ecc.

Hist. lib. i. cap. 13.

‡ Tacit. Morib. Germ.

§ Bede, ut sup.

|| Mallet. Introduc. vol. I. cap. vii.



released from its mortal bondage, it ascended to Heaven, and arriving at the palace of Woden, was there received with acclamations of joy; in this happy place the departed spirits spent their time in a continual succession of pleasures, suitable to their taste whilst they inhabited the present world: the whole day was passed in martial exercises, and counterfeited battles; when these sports were finished, they retired to the hall of Woden, and began their evening's entertainment, which consisted in feasting and carousing deep draughts of mead and ale from the skulls of their enemies. On the other hand, their Hell was a place of continual idleness, sickness, and deep distress.\*

Odin, or Woden, the true god of the Germans, was worshipped amongst the first colonies who came from the east, and peopled Germany and Scandinavia. In after times, a second band came from the east to those parts, under the conduct of a valiant chief, who finding the worship which was paid to this supreme deity, assumed the same name, and claimed a share in all those honours which belonged to the god alone.† This second Woden was a mighty warrior, and particularly

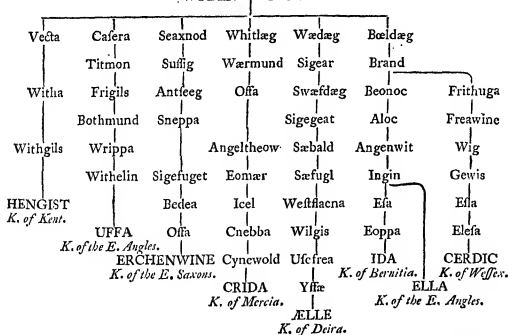
Odin, or Woden, two deities of this name.

\* Mallet Introduët. vol. I. cap. 7. & vide Ancient Edda, in the second volume of the Northern Antiquities.

† M. Maller, in his *Introduit. à l'Histoire de Dannemarc*, informs us, that there is a third Woden mentioned by some authors, so that it is very possible (says he) this name may have been usurped by many different warriors, out of policy and am-

bition; of all whom, posterity have, in process of time, made but one single person.—The founders of the Saxon heptarchy in Britain all of them declared themselves descended from Woden, and that at the distance only of a few generations, but without doubt it was only from one of these usurping princes. Their genealogy is as follows:

WODEN. = FRIGGA.



successful

successful in battle, from whence he was after believed to be the god of war. He civilized the country, and introduced amongst the people many useful arts, before unknown, so that the infatuated multitude soon worshipped him as the true god, built temples to his honour, offered sacrifices, and paid him every other duty which formerly belonged to the deity, with whom he is generally confounded; and to him the fourth day of the week was dedicated.

Frigga, the principal goddess of the Germans.

When the second Woden arrived in Germany, the people also adored a great goddess, under the appellation of Mother Earth; and as his followers had deified him, so also they advanced the glory of his consort, Frigga, and made her equal in honour with the goddess Earth; to whom, it seems, was transferred all the rites and religious ceremonies, formerly due to that divinity alone. At last, she was adored as the goddess of love and pleasure, who bestowed upon her votaries all kinds of delight, happy marriages, and easy child-births; to her was consecrated the sixth day of the week.

Thor, the god of thunder, &c.

The bravest of the sons of Woden and Frigga, was Thor, who presided over the meteors and the air, and had the direction of storms, tempests, thunder, and lightning; the people prayed to him for winds, rains, and fruitful seasons; to this god was dedicated the fifth day of the week. These three seem to have been their principal deities; besides whom, they had many others; of them, together with their several offices, a full account will be given hereafter.

The Germans sacrificed human creatures,

The Germans, like other barbarous nations, were cruel in their religious worship; for thinking their gods as fond of blood and destruction as themselves, their altars often streamed with human gore; these wretched victims were chiefly criminals, captives, or slaves; but on an important occasion, even people of the highest rank and dignity shared in the same miserable fate.

## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T III.

## C H A P. IV.

*The Ecclesiastical History of the Anglo-Saxons, from their Conversion by St. Augustine, A. D. 596, to the Accession of Egbert, A. D. 803.*

WE may remember that we left the Britons in possession of the Christian faith in its original purity, and restored from the pollution of the fatal Pelagian heresy, which had occasioned so much trouble to eradicate. It is true, that from the departure of Germanus, to the time that the arrival of Augustine called upon the Britons to assert their right as a national church, independent of any foreign authority, we have but slender accounts of the state of religion amongst them. However, it seems, that as their calamities increased, they became less religious, and were at last involved in a state of impiety and looseness; but though these accounts may be thought to be somewhat exaggerated, yet from the general view of ancient records, it appears very plain that there was but too much ground for this heavy accusation.\*

The state of the British church briefly considered.

The

\* Many authors, notwithstanding the accusations which Gildas has laid to the charge of the Britons, and the clergy in general, have supposed that they held their faith inviolate, and zealously, for a considerable time after the departure of Germanus; and that there were some of the clergy who took great pains in the education of the youth: for instance, Dubritius, (who was one of the disciples of Germanus, and first bishop of Landaff, but after made archbishop of Caerleon) had the

chief direction of two schools for the instruction of young men, for the service of the church. Iltutus, another religious man, and fellow-labourer with Dubritius, presided over another seminary of learning, (now called Lantact, or the church of Iltut, in Glamorganshire.) These were both of them distinguished for their learning, and brought up several very famous men: so that the British church, amidst all the calamities of these times, was considerable for the learning and piety which flourished

The hatred of  
the Saxons to  
the Christians.

The Saxons who came over into Britain, were not only Heathens themselves, but they conceived an inveterate hatred against the Christian religion. Soon after their arrival, casting off the mask of amity, they commenced open hostilities against the Britons, and joining with their old enemies, the Scots and Picts, drove them from their habitations, and took possession of the more fruitful part of the land. Some of the wretched natives fled to Brittany, in Gaul, some to Cornwall, some even sought refuge amongst their barbarous foes, the Scots and Picts; but the greater part got them into the western division of Britain, (since called Wales) where, hid amongst the mountains and woods, they preserved the wretched remnant of their once flourishing and popular state.\*

Cent. VI.

The ground-  
work of the  
Saxons' conver-  
sion.

The hatred which the Saxons entertained against the Britons was also exasperated by their being Christians; therefore they pursued them with unrelenting rigour, and murdered the clergy without any mercy wherever they were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.† But after some time had elapsed, the fierceness of these ruinous contests were in some measure abated; and the Saxons enjoying their dominions in quietness, became more reconciled to the Britons, and by degrees began to form alliances with them, so that from their discourses they conceived a more favourable opinion of the Christian faith, and wished to be better instructed in its principles. Here again the British clergy are accused of being indolent and careless in the propagation of the gospel, and neglecting these happy opportunities which offered for them to make new converts, and be daily adding to the number of the church of Christ.‡ About the year 570, Ethelbert, king of Kent, contracted an alliance with Chilperic, king of France, and married his daughter Berta; but she having always been brought up in the profession of Christianity, it was agreed upon before the conclusion of the marriage, that she should be allowed the public exercise of her religion, and Letardus, a Gaulish bishop, with other of the clergy, to attend upon her. On her arrival, a church, formerly built by the Britons, and dedicated to St. Martin, was prepared for her, wherein she performed all the duties of her religion without the least restraint;§ and it appears certain, what by the

flourished amongst its directors. From hence we may justly conclude, that Gildas has set the worst face upon matters. But even these authors, who have thus strenuously defended the Britons, confess that their synods, (of which, it is true, we have but very imperfect accounts, either of the time or the transactions) reflected no honour either to the princes or the clergy concerned in them; the first appear to have been guilty of enormous crimes, and the latter accepted of donations to the

church as sufficient marks of repentance. This conclusion surely confirms, in some measure, the words of Gildas, and plainly shews the degeneracy of the clergy in general. Vide Usser. Primord. page 445. Spelman's Council. Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. II.

\* Vide the Chronicle, part. II.

† Bede, lib. i. cap. 15.

‡ Gildas Epist.

§ Bede, lib. i. cap. 25.

persuasion of this princess, and the exhortations of the bishop and his assistants, who came over into Britain with her, the mind of the king was well disposed to listen to the preaching of Augustine, who not long afterwards came from Rome. Cent. VI.

This was the posture of affairs amongst the Saxons in Britain when Gregory the Great came to the papal seat, about the year 590, who was <sup>Gregory the Great, the chief instrument of the Saxons' conversion.</sup> the chief instrument of the conversion of the Saxons. At what time he formed this design, or the first occasion which moved him to undertake it, cannot so easily be ascertained: it has, indeed, been imputed to his pity, on seeing certain Saxon youths exposed to sale in the public market at Rome, and being struck with their comely appearance, he made enquiry concerning them, and was informed from whence they were, and that they were ignorant of the worship of the true God, as were all their countrymen. When he heard this, with the zealous spirit of a true Christian, he resolved to promote the conversion of the Saxons in Britain.\* If this circumstance might give the first occasion of his conceiving such a design, it is highly probable that he might also receive letters from Berta, queen of Kent, signifying the desire which the Saxons in general had of being instructed in the gospel truths, and these letters might confirm him in his resolutions.†

When Gregory had determined upon this undertaking, he made <sup>Augustine chosen by Gregory, to execute his commission.</sup> choice of Augustine, prior of the monastery of St. Martin's, at Rome, to perform his commission, assisted with about forty other monks. In the year 596, Augustine, with his assistants, set forward on their journey towards Britain; but coming into Gaul, they were affrighted with the character which they there received of the Saxons, and considering also that they were entirely ignorant of the language and customs of that people, they determined to proceed no farther, and Augustine posted back to Rome, to inform Gregory of his fears. But Gregory having the matter at heart, gave him fresh encouragements, and sent him back to his associates in Gaul, with recommendatory letters to the king and queen there, as well as to the bishops, intreating them to assist the laudable design of Augustine as much as lay in their powers. Thus inspired with fresh courage by his instructor, Augustine set forth again; and having provided proper interpreters to go with him, he, with his company, sailed the same year to Britain, and landing first upon the island of Thanet, he sent to the king and queen of Kent, informing them of his arrival, and the importance of his message: the king received him very graciously, and though he did not immediately profess the Christian faith himself in a public manner, yet he gave Augustine free leave to

\* Bede, lib. ii. cap. 1.

† Notwithstanding the story above related, it may seem very likely to be true, that to these letters was owing the resolution of Gregory from the beginning; for it

appears plainly, that this princess took the greatest pains to prepare the mind of her husband for the reception of the gospel truths, if he did not absolutely convert him to Christianity.

Cent. VI. preach to his people, and instruct them in the doctrine of the gospel; at the same time he assigned him a place of abode in the city of Canterbury.\*

The great success of Augustine in Kent.

Augustine having hitherto succeeded so well, went speedily to Canterbury, and with his company joining the little community of Christian priests belonging to the queen, they presently set about the performance of their commission, and preached with great zeal to the people, and their pious endeavours were crowned with the greatest success; for, it is said, that in less than the space of one year, ten thousand of the Kentish Saxons received baptism, and renounced all their former errors and superstitions; amongst which number, the king himself is thought to have been one. Augustine, transported with the fortunate success of his doctrines, went over into Gaul, and was consecrated bishop of the English, by the archbishop of Arles, conceiving that this new honour would give him additional consequence in the eyes of his converts. No sooner was he returned to Britain, than he dispatched Laurentius, a presbyter, and Peter, a monk, to Rome, to acquaint Gregory with his proceedings, and the great progress which he made in the execution of his undertaking; he also desired Gregory to send him directions for his future conduct, and at the same time proposed several questions in writing. To all these Gregory (some time after) returned full and satisfactory answers, which were brought to Augustine by Melitus, who came over into Britain about the year 601, with an additional number of religious men, to assist in the completion of the great work already begun; with him he brought the pall, with orders from Gregory to constitute Augustine primate of the English church; at the same time giving him full power and authority over the British clergy, to teach the unlearned, confirm the weak, and correct the obstinate. But when the Britons were made acquainted with this part of the proceedings of Gregory, they knowing themselves to be an independent church, openly and solemnly disavowed all subjection to Augustine, and set aside the authority of Gregory himself.†

Cent. VII. The first beginning of the disputes between the British clergy and Augustine seems to have been as follows:—This prelate desirous of putting in force the authority which had been given to him by his employer, over the Britons; through the means of Erhelbert, obtained a meeting with them at a place called Augustine's Oak,‡ in the confines of Wesssex, where Augustine proposed to the British clergy, that they should come into the unity of the church, and join with him and his followers in preaching to the Saxons. After they had taken some time to consider on the consequences of these arguments, and reflecting on what alterations

The dispute between Augustine and the British clergy.

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 23.  
† Ibid. cap. 25, 26, 27, & 29.

‡ *Agur-tinur-ac*, in the Saxon version of Bede, by Elfred. Vide Bede, lib. ii, cap. 2.

would be necessary for them to make in their religious forms of worship, they were at a loss how to act, being on one hand unwilling to introduce any innovations into their religion; whilst, on the other, they were very fearful of offending Ethelbert, who seemed to espouse the cause of Augustine with great fervency. Thus undetermined in their resolutions, they are said to have applied to a certain anchorite, reputed for his wisdom and holiness, to know whether they ought to quit the ancient rites of their ancestors, and submit to the proposals of Augustine: he answered, "If he be a man of God, you ought to follow him." Being asked how they should know whether he was a man of God: he answered, "By his humility and gentle deportment."

Afterwards, seven of the British bishops, with Dinot, abbot of Ban-<sup>The British</sup>chor, and other learned men, came on a certain day to a place appointed, <sup>clergy offended</sup> in order to meet Augustine a second time. The Britons contrived that <sup>with Augustine,</sup> Augustine should be seated before they entered the assembly; when they came in, he proudly kept his seat, without rising to salute or receive them, which haughty deportment raised the greatest resentment in their breasts, so that they resolved to oppose his arguments, as being now convinced that he was no man of God. After some time spent in fruitless disputes, Augustine addressed himself in this manner to the Britons: "You act contrary to the customs of the Universal Church in many particulars; however, enjoy your own usages as you please, only yield to us in three things; first, to keep the feast of Easter as we do; secondly, to use the same form of baptism with us; and lastly, to join with us in preaching the gospel to the unconverted Saxons." To which they hastily replied, "That they would not agree with him in any one of those conditions, nor would they acknowledge him as their archbishop." Augustine irritated by this reply, declared angrily, that "Since they had refused peace from their brethren, they might expect war from their enemies; and because they would not join in preaching life to the English Saxons, they should receive death at their hands."\*

Three years after this unsuccessful conference, A. D. 604, Augustine consecrated three bishops: Melitus, to preach to the East Saxons; Justus,

\* From these menaces, Augustine is by many grievously accused of being accessory to the murder of the monks of Banchor, which was executed by Ethelfrith, as related page 131 of this volume; for this prelate having miscarried in the hopes he had conceived of bringing the Britons to his authority, out of resentment, stirred up Ethelbert to persuade Ethelfrith to destroy those hapless monks, because Dinot, their abbot, seems to have had so great a share in the contradictions of the Britons. But says Inett, though these rash and unwarrantable menaces of Augustine are without

excuse, yet there is great probability that this affair happened after the death of that prelate; which must be, if he deceased A. D. 604, as Mr. Wharton has given many weighty reasons to prove. Now it is certain that this slaughter happened A. D. 607, so that one would be led to judge as favourably as possible of an affair which can by no means be proved, and, indeed, which reason seems to contradict. Vide *Anglie Sacre*, pars I. page 91, & Dr. Inett's *History of the English Church*, vol. I. page 35, &c.

## Cent. VII.

State of the church at the death of Augustine.

to be bishop of Rochester; and Laurentius, to succeed him in the see of Canterbury. In the same year, it is generally thought that Augustine died; but this is a matter which has been very much contested: however, it seems plain, that, before his death, the greater part of the kingdom of Kent had received the Christian faith, and that the cathedrals of Canterbury and Rochester were begun; also some other churches, founded originally by the Britons, were repaired, and provision made for the education and subsistence of the clergy; all of which was chiefly owing to the piety and munificence of Ethelbert, king of Kent, and the zeal of Augustine and his assistants.\* No step seems hitherto to have been made towards the conversion of the other kingdoms of the Saxon heptarchy.

Laurentius succeeds Augustine.

After the death of Augustine, Laurentius succeeded him in the see of Canterbury; but the exact time of his advancement is just as uncertain as the decease of his superior, upon which it depended. No sooner was he in possession of his dignity, than he followed the example of Augustine, and strove to prevail upon the clergy of the Britons and Scots to change their ancient usages, and to celebrate the festival of Easter in the same manner he and his followers did; but he was equally unsuccessful as his predecessor had been; for the breach was made still wider by the succeeding conferences, inasmuch that the Scotch Christians at last refused all conversation with this prelate, or any of his followers.†

The conversion of the East Saxons.

About this time, however, a work of greater consequence was begun, which succeeded much more happily than the former; this was the conversion of the East Saxons. Sebert, the son of Ricula, the sister of Ethelbert, king of Kent, at the same time was king of Eastsex, which he held as tributary under his uncle; by whose persuasion, and the zealous labours of Melitus, both himself, and a considerable part of his subjects, were prevailed upon to renounce their idolatry, and embrace the Christian faith. Melitus went into Eastsex some time in the year 604, after he had been consecrated bishop by Augustine, and being well received by king Sebert, he proceeded with great zeal in the performance of his religious designs, and founded a new bishopric, the seat whereof was fixed at London, by the appointment of Ethelbert; by whose munificence, the cathedral church in that city, dedicated to St. Paul, was first begun. In the year 610, Melitus went to Rome, to consult with Boniface the Fourth, who was at that time possessed of the papal seat, and returned soon after with letters from that prelate for Ethelbert, king of Kent.‡

Decline of the Christian religion in Eastsex.

Notwithstanding all the pious labours of Melitus, and the endeavours of Sebert, to promote and establish the Christian religion in Eastsex, too many of the new-made proselytes were but lukewarm, and wavering in their faith. Upon the death of Sebert, which happened towards the conclusion of the year 615, his three sons, Serred, Seward, and Sige-

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 3.  
Angl. Sac. p. I. page 91.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 3.  
‡ Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 4.

bert,



bert, who jointly succeeded him in the kingdom, being no longer under the controulment of their father, threw off all that shew of religion that they had kept up during his life-time, and openly returned again to their former idolatry; nor could the earnest persuasions of Melitus prevail upon them to follow the excellent example of their deceased parent; but coming into the church, they commanded Melitus to give them the holy bread, and administer to them the sacrament, as he was wont to do to their father, which he resolutely refused, unless they would forsake their present wicked life, and again embrace the doctrine of Christianity. Provoked at this refusal, they drove Melitus from his see, who fled into Kent, in order to consult with Laurentius what step was best for him to take.\* The people of Eastsex seeing the wicked inclinations of their governors, laid aside all restraint, and flocked back again to their former abominations.

Cent. VII.

By the time Melitus reached Kent, a change, almost as alarming as that which had happened in Eastsex, had taken place there; for, in the beginning of the year 616, pious Ethelbert departed this life, and was succeeded by his son Edbald, who, though he had during his father's life-time been carefully instructed in the Christian doctrines, was no sooner seated on the throne, than he apostatised from the true faith, and gave permission to his subjects to renew the worship of their Pagan deities, notwithstanding all the zealous endeavours of the bishops of Canterbury and Rochester to prevent this alarming evil. Encouraged by the example of their prince, great numbers fell off daily from the true faith, and idolatry began again to flourish in the confines of Kent.

The apostasy of  
Edbald, king  
of Kent.

Alarmed at the dreadful appearance of affairs, the bishops consulted seriously together, and by common consent it was concluded upon, that it would be in vain to make any further attempts to stop the ruinous apostasy, which broke in upon the church on every side; therefore, they all agreed to leave Britain, and return again to Rome. In pursuance of this resolution, Justus, bishop of Rochester, and Melitus, presently withdrew, and passed over into Gaul; and though Laurentius still tarried for a time behind, yet he determined to follow them as soon as he could with convenience;† but just as he had prepared to depart, king Edbald, touched with the stings of conscience, repented him of his apostasy, and again embraced the faith of Christ. This sudden alteration in the king

The resolution  
of the bishops.

\* Bede, lib. ii. cap. 5.

† Having prepared for his departure, the night before he had determined to set out, he fixed upon a strange method of taking leave of his church; for he caused his bed to be laid in the cathedral, and lodged there that night, when St. Peter appeared to him, and having reproached him for his cowardice, he scourged the shoulders of this prelate, so as to leave the

marks of the lashes upon his body. The next day he went to the king, and told him what had happened, shewing his back. This relation had such an effect upon the king, that he forsook his idolatry. But if there is any truth in this miracle, as Bede calls it, or whether it was owing to God, or the age, is left to the judgment of the reader. Vide Bede, Eccles. Hist. l. ii. c. 6. & Inett's Hist. of the English Church.

Cent. VII. put a powerful check to the growth of Paganism, and gave fresh life to the Christian cause. Melitus and Justus were now recalled again, and returned to Britain about a year after their departure; and Justus was restored to his see at Rochester; but the Londoners had so absolutely renounced their belief in Christ, that Edbald could by no means replace Melitus in his former seat. In this state continued the affairs of the church until the death of Laurentius, who departed this life about the year of our Lord 619.\*

The christian religion first planted in Northumberland.

After the decease of Laurentius, Melitus succeeded him in the archbishopric, which he held the space of five years, and then died: no material alteration happened in the church during that time. Upon his death, Justus, bishop of Rochester, was advanced to the see of Canterbury, about the year 624. The year following, Edwine, king of Northumberland, married Ethelburga, sister of Edbald, king of Kent; and as she had always been brought up in the Christian faith, it was agreed upon before her marriage, that she should be permitted freely to exercise her own religion; and accordingly Paulinus was made a bishop, in order to attend upon her. The next year, A. D. 626, Edwine consented to have his daughter Enfleda (his first child by Ethelburga) baptized; and through the persuasion of the queen, and the indefatigable labours of Paulinus, Edwine himself was baptized the following year, on Easter day, and openly professed his conversion to the Christian faith. After this, Edwine founded an episcopal see at York, and he sent to Honorius, then bishop of Rome, from whom he received the pall, and title of metropolitan, which he bestowed upon Paulinus.†

Edwine's care for the propagation of the gospel.

Edwine now became a very zealous Christian, and by his earnest persuasions prevailed upon his friend Redwald, king of the East Angles, to embrace the same religion; besides which, he promoted the propagation of the gospel in the northern borders of Mercia, and in that part of Lincolnshire that borders upon the Trent. In the year 631, Justus, archbishop of Canterbury, died, and Honorius succeeded him, who was consecrated by Paulinus, archbishop of York. During the life of Edwine, the gospel flourished in Northumberland; but he being unfortunately slain in the month of October, A. D. 633, the whole kingdom was overrun by two cruel enemies, so that Paulinus was driven from his seat, and, accompanied with Ethelburga, (the unfortunate queen, who survived her husband Edwine) returned into Kent, where he was made bishop of Rochester, in which place he died.‡

The apostasy of the two kings of Northumberland.

After the death of Edwine, two kings assumed the rule in Northumberland; Eanfrid bearing rule in Bernicia, and Osric in Deira. These princes, although they had received the Christian baptism, and acknowledged that faith in Scotland, where they had taken refuge, were no

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 6. & Inett's History of the English Church.

† Bede, lib. ii. cap. 10, 14, & 17.  
‡ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 20.

sooner in possession of the regal dignities, than they renounced the true religion, and wickedly returned to Paganism. Their apostasy, together with the destruction which had preceded in Northumberland, brought the Christian religion to a very low ebb in that kingdom.\* Also amongst the East Angles no progress was made; for though Redwald, at the intreaty of Edwine, king of Northumberland, had been baptized, yet far from continuing stedfast in the profession of the true faith, he, not long after, through the persuasion of his queen, gave it entirely up, and followed the Pagan rites as he had done before.†

About a year after the death of Edwine, A. D. 634, the two apostate kings were killed by Cadwallo, the British monarch; against whom Oswald fought a successful battle, in which Cadwallo was slain, and all his forces routed. Oswald, after this victory, took the government of Northumberland upon him; and as he was a very pious man, and zealous for the Christian religion, to which he had been converted in Scotland, he immediately set about the restoration of the same, which had suffered so much of late in those parts. The better to effect his laudable purpose, he sent into Scotland, desiring that a bishop might be sent from thence to instruct his people; the first who came not being approved by the people, a second arrived, whose name was Aidan, a just man; by his labours, a vast number of the Northumbrians were converted; and because he did not at first understand the Saxon language, the king himself used to expound his meaning to the people. This pious prelate, far from using the pomp and shew of the Roman missionaries, preached the word of God in its primitive plainness and simplicity. Oswald now appointed the episcopal see of Lindisferne, which before had been at York, and Aidan was made bishop there. He also perfected the cathedral at York, and built churches in many parts of his kingdom. The encouragement which he gave to all religious persons, caused several of the Scotch and Irish clergy to come into Northumberland, so that by their joint endeavours the Christian faith was advanced daily; besides all this, public schools were erected for the instruction both of men and youth, in learning and religion. In this flourishing state the church continued until the death of Oswald, which happened A. D. 642.‡

Nearly about the same year that Oswald mounted the throne of Northumberland, Birinus, a bishop from Rome, arrived in the western parts of Britain, and began to preach the gospel with great success to the West Saxons: Oswald at the same time seeking the daughter of Cynegils in marriage, who was then king of that dominion, joined his intreaties with those of Birinus, and prevailed upon that prince to be baptized, which was performed at York, in the year 635. After the conversion of their king, the people listened attentively to the zealous instructions of Birinus, and the Christian religion quickly gained great ground in West-

*Oswald restores the Christian religion in Northumberland.*

*The conversion of the West Saxons to Christianity.*

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 1.

† Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 3. & infra.

‡ Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 4.

Cent. VII. *sex.* The year following, Cwichelm, the son and colleague of Cynegils, was also baptized at York, and an episcopal see was founded at Dorchester, of which Birinus was made bishop.\*

The conversion  
of the people of  
the East Angles.

The light which sprung up amongst the East Angles was suddenly extinguished by the apostasy of Redwald; but after his death, he was succeeded in that kingdom by his son Eorpwald, who was a prince of a meek and tractable disposition, so that through the earnest persuasions of Edwine he renounced the errors of idolatry, and was baptized A. D. 632,† but he was traiterously murdered about four years after, therefore no great step could be made towards a general reformation. Eorpwald was succeeded by his half-brother, Sigebert, who was a zealous advocate for Christianity: in the former part of his life he had been banished into Gaul, where he was converted, and instructed in the gospel truths. Soon after he mounted the throne, a Burgundian bishop, named Felix, out of pure zeal, came over into Britain, and offering his service to Honorius, then archbishop of Canterbury, was sent by him to Sigebert, king of the East Angles, by whom he was gladly received, and with great earnestness he preached the gospel to the people of that kingdom. Presently after, he was joined by Furfeus, an Irish monk, who was equally zealous for the propagation of Christianity, and their united endeavours were crowned with surprising success; for the greater part of that nation were soon converted, and the true faith settled upon a permanent foundation. The episcopal see, since removed to Norwich, was now founded at Dumnock,‡ and Felix made first bishop there. Sigebert, the king, also caused schools to be erected in his kingdom, for the instruction of youth, and the improvement of their morals.§

All Kent not  
yet converted.

Thus whilst the gospel shed its happy influence over the island, the missionaries in Kent used repeated endeavours to bring the British and Scotch clergy to the usages of the Roman church, but without success. The progress of the Christian religion in Kent, is not so well known: in the year 640, Ercombert, who was then king of that district, published an edict, requiring all his subjects to relinquish their worship of idols, and that all the idols throughout his kingdom should be destroyed, and appointed officers to see that those who violated this law should be punished;|| by which it should seem that they had not all of them as yet forsaken their errors.

The East Saxons  
re-converted.

The East Saxons who had long ago returned to their former idolatry, and continued in the same, notwithstanding the earnest persuasions and endeavours which were made use of by Melitus, their late bishop, whom they banished from his see of London, about the year 654, again received the Christian faith, under Sigebert the Second, their king, who, at the

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 3.

† Ibid. lib. iii. cap. 15.

‡ Probably the same place that is now known by the name of Dunwich, in the

county of Suffolk. Vide Inett's History of the English Church, vol. I. fol. 51.

§ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 18.

|| Ibid. cap. 18.

persuasion of Osweo, had renounced his errors, and was baptized by Finan, bishop of Lindisfarn; after his baptism, Sigebert begged the assistance of some of the clergy, as also of Cedd, a man of great holiness, to forward the conversion of his subjects: accordingly Cedd, with another clergyman, was sent into Eastsex, who went through the dominions of Sigebert, preaching the gospel with such energy and zeal, that a general conversion of the people crowned their pious labours. Having formed a church, Cedd returned to Northumberland, where he was consecrated bishop by Finan, but soon came back to Eastsex, and established his see at London, about forty-one years after the expulsion of Melitus.\*

Cent. VII.

In Mercia the Christian doctrine had begun to take root, even before the arrival of Cedd in Eastsex; for Peada, the son of Penda, king of Mercia, seeking in marriage the daughter of Osweo, named Alcfleda, his suit was rejected because he was not a Christian: however, by the means of Osweo, and the persuasion of Alcfred, the brother of Alcfleda, he embraced the true faith, and was baptized, with several noblemen, who attended him into the north, by Finan, bishop of Lindisfarn, about the year 653, and by this means he obtained the damsel. Peada returning into Mercia, carried with him four priests, Cedd, Adda, Bette, and Diuma, a Scotfman, by whose pious endeavours all that part of Mercia, called Middle Angles,† (which had been committed to the government of Peada by his father) was converted to the Christian faith; nor was it confined to that part only, its light began to diffuse itself over the other parts of that extensive dominion, and this during the life-time of Penda, who, though himself a Heathen, yet he no ways hindered either the conversion of his son, or propagation of the gospel. Cedd, however, was soon after recalled from Mercia by Osweo, and sent into Eastsex, when Diuma was made bishop of the new converts, and consecrated by Finan, under the title of bishop of the Mid English and Mercia.‡

The conversion of the Mercians.

Finanus being dead, who had succeeded Aidan, Coleman, a Scotfman, was made bishop of Lindisfarn. Whilst he sat in this seat, a warm dispute was made concerning the keeping of Easter, shaving the crowns of the clergy, and other religious ceremonies, wherein the Scotf and British Christians differed from those who had been converted by the Romish missionaries. Osweo, king of Northumberland, who had been taught and baptized by the Scots, married Eanfled, the daughter of Edwine, who had been educated in Kent, and followed the customs of the Christians there, so that when the king was celebrating the festival of Easter, his queen and her followers were engaged in the severities of Lent. For settling all these matters a synod was appointed to be held at the abbey

Dispute concerning religious ceremonies.

\* Bede, lib. iii. cap. 22.

gli, in the original. Vide Bede, lib. iii.

† Middelengh, id est Mediterranei Angli.

cap. 21.

‡ Ibid.

Gent. VII. of Streanfhalch,\* in the year of our Lord 661. Ofweo himself appeared in favour of the Britons, also Coleman, bishop of Lindisfarne, Cedd, bishop of the East Saxons, and several other Scotch and British bishops, and clergymen. On the other side, was Alcfred, the son of Ofweo, who had been educated by Wilfrid; Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, who had succeeded Berinus in the see of Dorchester; Abbot Wilfrid; this man, though born amongst the Northumbrians, and intrusted by the Scotch bishops in the early part of his life, yet after that, being long resident in Kent, he there imbibed the principles of the Kentish Christians: of the same party was Agatha, a presbyter, James, a deacon, and Romanus, with many other of the clergy. The matter was fully debated with great warmth on either side; however, in the end, Ofweo decided in the favour of the Catholics, to the great uneasiness of the opposite party.†

The advancement of Wilfrid.

Coleman offended at the decision made against him and his sect, shortly after relinquished his bishopric; and returned back into his own country, and Tudda, one of the opposite party, was advanced in his stead; but he dying within a few months, Wilfrid, (at that time but thirty years of age) was chosen bishop of Northumberland through the interest of prince Alcfred, his scholar: this Wilfrid was the principal speaker in favour of the Roman usages and ceremonies in the above dispute, and to him was chiefly owing the success which that party had met with at that time.‡

The reason of Wilfrid's disappointment.

Hitherto the archbishop of Canterbury had no claim over the northern English; for Wilfrid, who had so warmly espoused the cause of the Kentish Christians, on being chosen bishop, went into France to be consecrated, although Deus Dedit, archbishop of Canterbury, was then living. Wilfrid staying too long in France, Ofweo was prevailed upon to consent to the election of another bishop, which was Gedda, a Scot, and said to have been the brother of that Cedd who had converted the East Saxons, and was now bishop of London. Cedda, immediately after his election, travelled into Kent, in order to be consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury; but he dying before Cedda arrived, he went into the west, and was there consecrated by Wini, bishop of Winchester; so that Wilfrid, on his return, was obliged to quit his dignity, and retire again to his monastery.§

A Saxon priest sent over to Rome to be consecrated.

Deus Dedit dying whilst Cedda was going towards Kent, the see of Canterbury was for a short time vacant; wherefore, after some debate between Ofweo, king of Northumberland, and Egbert, king of Kent, an agreement was made to chuse some person out of Britain, who should be an Englishman by birth, and to send him over to Rome, in order to be consecrated, according to the usages and ceremonies of that church.

\* Now Whitby, in Yorkshire.

† Bede, lib. iii. cap. 25.

‡ Ibid. cap. 24. & Eddii Vita Wilfridi, fol. 56.

§ Bede, lib. iii. cap. 29. & Vita Wilfridi, ut sup.

Accordingly, Wighast, a presbyter, bred in Kent, was chosen by the common consent to be archbishop of Canterbury, and forthwith sent to Rome to be consecrated; but he died there of a plague, which prevailed at that time, before all the ceremonies were completed. Vitalian, who was then bishop of Rome, took hold of the opportunity which offered of advancing his own power, and consecrated one Theodore, a Greek by nation, born at Tarsus, in Celicia, and bred a monk, a man of great learning and piety; and when he had given him his instructions, sent him over into Britain, attended by Adrian, a monk, who was set as a kind of spy over him, lest he should vary from the usages of the church of Rome; and introduce those of the Grecian church.\*

Theodore was consecrated the 25th day of March, in the year 668, and in May, the year following, he came over into Britain, where he was well received; and being an active busy man, he advanced the authority of the archbishops of Canterbury, and of the bishop of Rome, more than all his predecessors had done since the death of Augustine.†

When Theodore came over into Britain, he disputed the legality of the consecration of Cedda, and declared, that he usurped the place of another, (meaning Wilfrid;) but Jaruman, bishop of Litchfield, dying at the same time, Cedda was advanced to that see, and Wilfrid restored to that of York. The two princes having now prepared all things for the union of the Saxon churches, a synod was held in the month of September, A. D. 673, at a place called Herudford, in the county of Hertfordshire.‡ At this meeting, besides Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury; there were present only four Saxon bishops in person, but not one of the British bishops, or any of their clergy; Wilfrid, bishop of York, appeared by a deputy; Risi, bishop of the East Angles, Lutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, Winfrid, bishop of Mercia, and Putta, bishop of Rochester, were the four that appeared in person. Here Theodore produced a book of canons, which were subscribed to by all the bishops and other clergy who were present. Thus were the Saxon churches of the Scotch and Roman establishment united by Theodore, who soon began to assume a great superiority in the kingdom; and three years after the above council, deposed Winfrid, bishop of Litchfield, for being disobedient to his commands.§

About the year 678, Wilfrid, bishop of York, was driven from his see by Egfrid, who, succeeding his father Osweo, now reigned in Northumberland, and his offence was either his pride, and the pomp which he assumed, or his assisting Etheldreda, the wife of Egfrid, in her religious designs: for after her marriage she had refused to cohabit with her husband, and preferring the monastic life, by the advice of Wilfrid, solicited a divorce, and at last, without the consent of the king, withdrew

Cent. VII.

Theodore sent over into Britain.

Synod held at Hartford.

Wilfrid driven from his see.

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 1.

† Ibid. & Vide Inett's History of the chief town of that county.

English Church, vol. I. page 73.

§ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 6.

Cent. VII. herself into a monastery, where she received the veil at the hands of Wilfrid, and could not be prevailed upon by the king to return by the most pressing intreaties.\*

New bishoprics  
ordained.

After the expulsion of Wilfrid, Bosa was made bishop of York, and a new bishopric was founded under the old name of Lindisfarn,† and Eata was made bishop thereof. Again, three years after, or thereabouts, this latter bishopric was subdivided, and a new see planted at Hagulfstad, and Trumbert was made bishop thereof; and Eata, the former bishop, had his title limited to that of bishop of Lindisfarn only. About the same time that this first division was made in the bishoprick of Northumberland, Egfrid founded another see at Sydnacester, in Lincolnshire, near the Humber;‡ and Eadhead being first consecrated at York, had the charge of the same committed to his care; but on the death of Wulfhere, king of Mercia, from whom Egfrid had won this part of the country by conquest, Ethelred, brother to Wulfhere, succeeding in the kingdom of Mercia, and in the year 678, recovered this province, and drove Eadhead from his seat: but some time either in the year after, or else in the following year, the bishopric of Sydnacester was again restored, by the authority of Ethelred himself, and Edelwine made bishop thereof.§

Wilfrid arrives  
at Rome, and  
his success.

Mean time Wilfrid hastened to Rome, in order to make complaint to Agatho, then bishop there, of the hard treatment he had met with, not only in being expelled from his see, but in having his diocese divided, and new bishoprics erected therein without his consent; and as he had nobody to oppose or contradict his story, he represented the matter in such a light, as convinced Agatho, and all the clergy who were present, that he had been ill-treated in the affair; therefore, the whole synod were of opinion that he ought to be restored to his see, and if the interests of religion required the division of his diocese, yet he ought to have full power and authority to appoint and constitute all such bishops as were under him: also, to give the greater force to this their determination, they decreed, that any presbyter refusing to be obedient to the same, he should be expelled from his office, and any of the laity guilty of the like offence should not be admitted to partake of the holy sacrament.||

Wilfrid's com-  
mission not re-  
garded.

Wilfrid having thus obtained his desires, hastened back to Britain, in order to shew the resolution of the bishop of Rome, and his synod, to Egfrid, king of Northumberland, who had deposed him, and to Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, who had been accessory to, or at least connived at his expulsion; but so little was the authority which he brought

\* Vita Etheldredæ, &c.

† Now Hexham, in Northumberland.  
Vide Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 12.

‡ This is the part of Lincolnshire, which is still known by the name of Lindsey.

§ Bede, ut supra.

|| Eddii Vita Wilfrid. cap. 29, 31, &c.

with



with him regarded by either one or the other, that he saw no hopes of succeeding in his attempt; on the contrary, Egfrid called a council of his bishops and nobility, where the matter was debated; and so far were they from siding with the turbulent prelate, that by their advice and consent, he was instantly sent to prison, where he was confined nine months.\*

We will now look back upon the misfortunes which happened in Kent:—That kingdom was invaded by Ethelred, king of Mercia, about the year 676; that prince finding none to oppose his march, spoiling the country before him, destroying churches, monasteries, and religious houses, without distinction, until he reached Rochester, which city he also ruined; and Putta, who was bishop there, was driven to such distress, that he was obliged to take upon him the humble employment of teaching the church singers, in order to support his old age from want and misery.†

But to go on. About this time a dangerous heresy, which had been long ago broached upon the continent, (and generally known by the name of the Monothelite heresy) began to make an alarming progress in the church, so that it required a public council to be called at Rome for the abolishing it.‡ The opinions on which this heresy was founded, entirely contradicted the distinct properties of the divine and human nature of Christ.† At the same time also, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, thought it his duty to take notice of a danger which was every day increasing, and therefore he signified his intentions to Egfrid, king of Northumberland, to Ethelred, king of Mercia, to Adulf, and his brothers, kings of the East Angles, and to Lothaire, king of Kent, by their common consent, a great council was called; the parties met at Hatfield, the 15th day of September, in the year 680.§

At this synod, after the sermon, Theodore proceeded to give a short account of the Christian faith in its original purity, as given to the primitive Christians by Christ himself, and his apostles. He produced to them the apostles' creed, and its explanation, as set forth by the fathers of the church, and confirmed in their general councils. All the bishops

\* Eddii Vita Wilfrid. cap. 34 & 35.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 12.

‡ Concil. tom. VI. col. 594.

§ Bede, lib. iv. cap. 17. Notwithstanding the pompous accounts which the monks give of this council, and of a hundred bishops there assembled, says Dr. Inett, we have great difficulty to find out the tenth part of that number; the whole kingdom of Mercia contained but two bishoprics, if we reckon that of Synnacester as one, which there is reason to think was not yet restored. But even supposing the other three, namely, of Worces-

ter, Hereford, and Leicester, were to be added, there could be but five. Erkenwald, bishop of London, was the only bishop of the East Saxons, and Hedda of the West; Boffa was bishop of York, and Eata of Lindisfarne, and Quichelm, bishop of Rochester, who succeeded Putta; so that as it does not appear that any of the British bishops were present, there could not be more than nine or ten, including Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury. Vide Dr. Inett's History of the English Church, vol. I. p. 106.

Cent. VII. instantly consented to these doctrines, and publicly declared, that they agreed with the whole catholic church, and also expressed their firm belief in the trinity.\*

Divisions made  
in the large bi-  
shoprics.

It was resolved upon, either at the time of the above synod, or else shortly after, to make divisions in the bishoprics in the kingdoms of Northumberland and Mercia; in the former, the see of Lindisfarne was divided, and that of Hagulfstad erected, as we have before declared. Egfrid also erected a new see in the more northern parts of his dominion, the which he had gained by conquest from the Picts, so that at this time there were four bishops in Northumberland; as Boffa, bishop of York, Eata, of Lindisfarne, Trumbert, of Hagulfstad, and Trumwin, of those parts lately subject to the Picts. In Mercia, where there was only one see, which was Litchfield, Ethelred added Worcester, Hereford, and Leicester;† besides these, he also restored that of Sydnacester, which had been formerly founded by Oswego, king of Northumberland, as has been said before.

Wilfrid, the  
great instrument  
of the conver-  
sion of the South  
Saxons.

We may remember, that before the above council was called, Wilfrid, the abdicated bishop of York, was committed to prison; from whence he was released by Egfrid, king of Northumberland, some time during the year 680. After his enlargement, he went into Mercia, and was entertained for a short time by Berthwald, nephew to Ethelred; but he was soon after commanded to leave that court, for Ethelred not being willing to anger Egfrid, would not afford him any protection; from thence he went into Wexsex, where the same objections to his stay were made. Being thus harassed by the displeasure of his prince, he at last sought protection amongst the South Saxons, who were as yet unconverted. Edelwalch, who at that time was king of Suffex, received Wilfrid with great joy, and assisted him in undertaking the conversion of his subjects. Previous to the coming of Wilfrid, Edelwalch had married a Christian princess, named Ebba, through whose persuasion he had himself embraced the Christian religion, and was baptized; so that a path was already opened for the propagation of the gospel. Edelwalch being zealous in the cause of Christ, not only encouraged those who were willing to receive his doctrine, but compelled many who were unwilling to be baptized, and profess it. The next step that Edelwalch took to advance the Christian religion amongst his subjects, was, to found a bishopric, and he planted the see thereof at his own capital city, at Seolsey,‡ and Wilfrid was constituted bishop.§

During the stay of Wilfrid amongst the South Saxons, Ceadwalla was banished his country, and for some provocation made war upon Edel-

\* Bede, lib. iv. cap. 17.

† For the disputes concerning this name, and whether Chester is not meant, vide *Anglia Sacra*, part I. page 427. & Innett's *Church History*, vol. I. page iii, &c.

‡ Seolsey, a village in Suffex.

§ Bede, lib. iv. cap. 13. & *Vita Wilfridi*, per Edd. cap. 40.

walch, and slew him in battle. Shortly after, coming to the crown of Cent. VII. Wessex, he overcame the two noblemen who still strove to uphold their sinking country; and in the year 685, made the South Saxons tributary to him. Suffex made tributary to Canwalla. This prince gaining some acquaintance with Wilfrid, invited him to his court; which invitation the prelate accepted of, and was received by that king with every mark of respect and esteem; so that he now employed his time between the South and West Saxons.\*

Wilfrid now recovered a great deal of his former consequence, and his zeal in the propagation of the gospel, gained him much esteem in the opinion of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury; so that about the year 687, he was reconciled to him, and also wrote a letter in his favour to Ethelred, king of the Mercians, and another to Alcfrid, king of Northumberland, who had succeeded his brother Egfrid, the old enemy of Wilfrid. These commendations so effectually pleaded his cause with Alcfrid, that he was recalled; and on his arrival in Northumberland, Cuthbert, the favourite prelate of that age, being dead, his interest bore down all opposition, so that Boffa, bishop of York, and John, bishop of Hagulfstad, were both driven from their bishoprics, and Wilfrid, in the self-same year, again restored to all his former glory, which he held better than four years; at the end of this time his haughty spirit broke forth again, and for some misunderstanding between him and Alcfrid, he was a second time deposed, and obliged to fly for his security into the kingdom of Mercia. Boffa was now again restored to his seat at York, and John to his bishopric at Hagulfstad. This change happened some time about the year 691.†

Wilfrid, after his second expulsion, was graciously received by Ethelred, king of Mercia; and Sexulphus, bishop of Litchfield and Leice- Wilfrid meets with a kind reception in Mercia. ster, dying at the time of his arrival, Hedda was made bishop of Litchfield, and Wilfrid bishop of Leicester. Whilst these things were transacting in the north, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, died, in the year 690, and the see of Canterbury continued vacant for the space of two years, when Brithwald, an Englishman, was chosen to succeed him, in the month of July, A. D. 692, although he was not consecrated until the latter end of June, the year following. This man had been abbot of Raculf, in Kent, and was well skilled in the holy scriptures, and acquainted with all the affairs of the church.‡

By the zeal and good conduct of Theodore, the English churches The regulations made by Theodore. were brought to some consistency and union; the title and authority of metropolitan was fixed on the bishops and see of Canterbury; great dioceses were divided, and episcopal sees ordained in proper places: besides these salutary regulations, Theodore is said with great fervency to have exhorted the well-disposed people to build churches, towns, and villages; and in order to forward the same, began the distinction and settlement of parishes; he also obtained a grant of the kings of England, that the right

\* Eddii Vita Wilfridi, cap. 41.

† Ibid. cap. 42 & 44.

‡ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9. & Vita Wilfridi, ut sup.

Cent. VII. of patronage should be vested in those by whose charitable donations churches were built.\* By such prudent means as these, at the latter end of this century, the light of the gospel was diffused throughout all the kingdoms of the heptarchy, and Christianity became the national religion; the church also began to incorporate with the state, and the laws of princes took religion under their protection, and made provision for the honour and support of the clergy.†

The Britons not persuaded to quit their manner of keeping Easter.

The controversies concerning the keeping of the festival of Easter, indeed, was disputed upon to very little purpose during this century: for, though the English churches received the new cycle, the Scots of Ireland, the Picts, and the Britons, did still adhere to their old calculation; therefore, towards the latter end of the century, Adhelm (then abbot of Malmesbury) was, by a synod of the West Saxon church, appointed to write against them, and he obeyed the order of the synod, and managed the controversy with such success, that many of the Britons, subjects of the kings of Wessex, were prevailed upon to adopt the catholic Easter. Early in the beginning of the eighth century, this learned abbot, Adhelm, was made bishop of Sherborn, which was at that time first founded.‡

Monasteries, what they were.

Monasteries were at this time the sole nurseries of learning, and therefore, whenever a new bishopric was founded, a monastery was also usually built, as well for the habitation, as the support, of the bishop. These places were colleges of priests, distinguished in after times by the name of secular canons, who were not bound to live a life of celibacy, but were permitted to marry, if they pleased; the same privilege was also granted to the monks and nuns: but the lewdness and irregularities which sprung up in these monasteries were soon after taken notice of, and just complaints made.

Cent. VIII. Early in the beginning of this century, the year 701, a synod was held at Oneſtreſfield, or Oſterfield, to consult upon the case of Wilfrid, and, as it seems, at the instigation of Alcfred, king of Northumberland; but by what means Wilfrid had again offended that prince is not known. However, Berthwald, archbishop of Canterbury, and the greater part of the English bishops who were then present, after a long debate, confirmed the sentence of Theodore, the late archbishop, respecting the division of the diocese of York; and also proceeded further, upon a general deprivation of whatever he, Wilfrid, held either in Mercia, or Northumberland: but this matter being again debated, a milder sentence was the result; for they now agreed, that if Wilfrid would give over all his

Wilfrid disgraced in a synod, and excommunicated.

\* Vide Ed. Wheelock's Notes upon Bede's Eccles. Hist. page 399.

† Vide the first four laws of Ina, king of the West Saxons, as published by Lambard, or by Ed. Wheelock, in his edition

of Bede's Eccles. Hist. and the interpretation given by Dr. Inett in his History of the English Churches, vol. I. pag. 120, 121.

‡ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 19.

other pretensions, he should be permitted to retain the abbey of Rippon, Cent. VIII. but that only on condition he would retire thither, and never stir beyond the bounds of that monastery without leave obtained of the king; nor should he ever after pretend to exercise the offices of his episcopal function; and also, that he should now, in the presence of the council, give his consent and submission to this sentence under his own hand. Wilfrid, who was present at the council, in an angry manner enumerated the services which he had done the church, and the injustice of such a sentence; he also declared, that Agatho, bishop of Rome, had pronounced him innocent. To this he received for answer, that the council regarded not the decrees of the bishop of Rome, but would be directed by those which had been made by Theodore, their own archbishop. He then proceeded to threaten them that he would go to Rome, and vindicate his innocence; and declared, that he would justify his proceedings against any one of them before the bishop there. This haughty answer was received in such a heinous manner, that he was excommunicated by the council for appealing to Rome, and not granting the judgment of this court to be decisive; and not only him, but all his followers and adherents were laid under the same predicament; and the sentence was so very severe, that if any priest, or abbot, of Wilfrid's party, should make the sign of the cross, to bless the meat of any Christian people, it should be esteemed as meat offered to idols, and accordingly be thrown out of the doors to the dogs: and also, that all holy vessels used by him, or any of his party, should not be used again till they had been washed, as if defiled by such touching. The council also affirmed, that their judgment in this synod was final, and not to be reversed by any other authority whatever.\*

After this harsh sentence was pronounced, Wilfrid went into Mercia, and enquired of Ethelred, if he intended to execute the same upon him, and deprive him of the preferment which he held under him; and he received from that prince this favourable answer, That the decree of the council should not be put in force in his dominions, until he should be informed of the determinations of the bishop of Rome.† Wilfrid, pleased with the regard which Ethelred discovered towards him, hastened to Rome with all the diligence he could, and presented a petition to John, then bishop there, beseeching him to use his endeavours to prevail upon Alcfred, king of Northumberland, to permit him to enjoy his two monasteries of Rippon and Hagulfstæd. Mean while, the legates from the council arrived, and accused the prelate of disobeying the decree of the metropolitan synod. John, and his council, having heard the accusation and defence of Wilfrid, pronounced him innocent, and received him (though excommunicated by the English) into their communion. In, or near the year 704, Wilfrid was sent back to Britain, with letters from John, bishop of Rome, requesting Egfrid, king of Northumberland,

\* Eddii Vita Wilfridi, cap. 45.

† Ejusdem, cap. 46.

Cent. VIII. and the archbishop of Canterbury, to call a council, and give the cause of Wilfrid another hearing; in order, if possible, to compromise the matter, and come to a friendly determination amongst themselves.\*

*Wilfrid returns to Britain.* Wilfrid being returned from Rome, went first to Berthwald, archbishop of Canterbury, and prevailed so far upon him, that he dropped all his resentment, and being reconciled to him, promised to use his endeavours to mitigate the sentence of the synod. Pleased with this success, the unfortunate prelate went from Kent to Mercia; but Ethelred, his patron, following the superstition of the times, had, just before his arrival, quitted his regal dignity, and taken the cowl in the monastery of Bradney; however, he received Wilfred favourably, and used his interest to procure him the favour of his successor, Cenred.

*The conclusion of Wilfrid's troubles.* In the year 705, Wilfrid, by the advice of Ethelred, sent messengers to Alcfrid, king of Northumberland, intreating that prince to permit him to come into his kingdom, that he might lay before him the letters which he had from Rome; but Alcfrid returned for answer, that he never would revoke what the synod had agreed upon as long as he lived, for what was called writings from the apostolic see. Badwin and Aldfrid, the two legates of Wilfrid, returned to him with this heavy news. But at the end of the same year, Alcfrid died of a languishing sickness, and after his death, his son Osred, a child of eight years old, being placed upon the throne, fresh application was made; and the ministry, who had the direction of the state, being chiefly favourers of Wilfrid, the matter was at last compromised; and because Bosa, bishop of York, died about the same time, John, bishop of Hagulstæd, was appointed to succeed him in that see; and Wilfrid was then placed in the bishopric of Hagulstæd, and permitted besides to enjoy his abbey of Rippon.†

*The bishopric of the West Saxons divided.* The affair of Wilfrid being thus terminated, in the same year deceased Hedda, bishop of the West Saxons, and upon his death the diocese was divided; for Daniel was made bishop of Winchester, and Adhelm bishop of Sherborn. Besides this, the bishopric of Seolfsey, in the kingdom of the South Saxons, and which, ever since the time that Wilfrid left it, had been under the administration of the West Saxon bishops, was now filled by Eadbert, late abbot of the same, and from this time continued a distinct bishopric.‡

*Pilgrimages in great vogue, and their abuse.* About the year 709, died Wilfrid, bishop of Hagulstæd, at Owndle, in Northamptonshire, being at that time near, if not full eighty years of age, and was buried with great pomp at Rippon, in Yorkshire.§ About the same time the making pilgrimages to Rome, and other places, famous by the death of the saints and martyrs, came into fashion; nor were these fantastical journeys confined to the men alone, the nuns and other female devotees partook of the same zeal. However good the primitive intention of pilgrimages may have been, it is certain, that they

\* Ejusdem, cap. 53. & infra.

† Ibid.

‡ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 19.

§ Eddii Vita Wilfridi, cap. 60.

were in the end productive of the greatest evils ; for, amongst the crouds Cent. VIII. of English that were constantly upon their travels, such scenes of lewdness and debauchery were carried on, as ought to have shocked a feeling mind, possessed of the smallest share of Christianity.\* This custom, which probably first began amongst the monks and professors of religion, diffused itself amongst the laity, and at last extended to the chief people of the state, so that we frequently find the kings and nobles engaged in the same ridiculous travels.†

Notwithstanding the writings of Adhelm, the bishop of Sherborn, and the earnest endeavours of others of the clergy, who were zealous in the cause of religion, the Britons yet continued to practise their ancient rites, and were as warm as ever in their opposition to the usages of the catholic Christians. In this posture stood the affairs of the English church at the death of Berthwald, archbishop of Canterbury, who departed this life in the very beginning of the year 731, and was succeeded by Tatwin, a man of great wisdom and learning ; he was consecrated at Canterbury, on Sunday the 10th of June, the self-same year, by four bishops, namely, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Inguald, bishop of London, Aldwin, bishop of Litchfield, and Aldulf, bishop of Rochester ; and without making any application to Rome for the pall, he entered immediately upon the discharge of his religious function.‡

The state of the English church in the year 731, was as follows :— The state of the English church, A. D. 731. Throughout the whole heptarchy there were about seventeen bishoprics, under the government of one metropolitan, the archbishop of Canterbury. In the kingdom of Kent there were two bishoprics, that of Canterbury, and that of Rochester ; Tatwin possessed the former, and the latter was in the hands of Aldulf. In the kingdom of the East Saxons there was only one see, which was London, and Inguald was at that time in possession of the same. There were two bishoprics in the kingdom of the East Angles, the first see at Dunmuck, of which Eadbert was bishop ; and the other at Helman, which seat was filled by Hadulacus. The kingdom of the West Saxons had also two sees, the first Winchester, of which Daniel was bishop ; the latter Sherborn, which was held by Frothere. The kingdom of the South Saxons was all under the diocese of Seolfey, which seat was at this time vacant, and the whole of that nation under the government of the West Saxon bishops. Mercia, the largest kingdom of the heptarchy, contained five episcopal sees, as Litchfield and Leicester, both at this time under the government of bishop Aldwin ; Sydnacester, (or Lindesey) over which Cymbert presided ; Worcester, whose bishop was the younger Winfrid ; and Hereford, which seat was possessed by Walfrod. In Northumberland there were four sees, as that of York, possessed by Wilfrid the Second ; Lindisfarn, held by Edilwald ; Hagulfad, where Acca, who had succeeded Wil-

\* Baron. Annal. an. 709. Epist. Bonifacii Concil. Brit. vol. I. p. 241.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 20.

‡ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 24.

Cent. VIII. frid, now presided; and Candida, Casa, or Withern, which see was held by Pectelmus.\*

The love of a  
monastic life,  
and its bad ef-  
fects.

The zealous love of a monastic life, which in the former century began to prevail, grew into great excess in the present; so that their prodigious increase, as well as the abuse of those societies, was but too justly complained of by the cotemporary writers, and called aloud for redress:† for this mad error so far infatuated the minds of the people in general, that the monks increased daily; kings and noblemen, queens, princefles, and others of high rank and esteem, followed this superstitious fashion; and from being useful to the community in general, retired from the world, and often left the people to distress and misery, whom they ought to have protected. It has been remarked, that in the space of about two hundred and twenty years, thirty of the English Saxon kings and queens resigned their dignity, and buried themselves in useless retirement; to these may be added an innumerable body of noblemen, soldiers, and others of a lower rank.‡

The see of York  
made an arch-  
bishopric.

From the union of the British churches, under Theodore, to the year 736, all that part of Britain possessed by the Saxons was but one province, and had no other metropolitan than the archbishop of Canterbury; but at, or near this time, the province of Canterbury was divided, and a new metropolitan see set up at York, to which belonged all the bishoprics within the kingdom of Northumberland; and Egbert, a descendant of the blood royal of that kingdom, was made first archbishop there.§ In the mean time, Tatwin being dead, he was succeeded by Nothelmus, in the see of Canterbury. Nothelmus also died about the year 740, and he again was succeeded by Cuthbert, bishop of Hereford, a pious and learned prelate.

The council of  
Cloveshoe.

In the year 747, a council, or provincial synod, was held at Cloveshoe, in which the English clergy asserted their own right, and disclaimed dependence on any foreign bishop; yet they appointed, that in the observance of festivals, the canonical hours of prayers, and the litanies and rogations, the usage of the church of Rome should be strictly observed; they ordained, that the clergy should be obliged to learn the creed, and Lord's prayer, in the English tongue, and teach them to the people; and that they should be able to explain, in the mother tongue, the offices of baptism, and the Lord's supper; and to be constant in their attendance on the communion of the body and blood of Christ, and to study the holy scriptures with diligence; if they had no knowledge of the Latin, they were required to learn some particular offices in the English tongue. This council consisted of the archbishop of Canterbury, and eleven suffragan bishops; these were Dunnus, bishop of Rochester,

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 24.

† Bede Epist. ad Egbert.

‡ Præfat. ad Monast. Ang. vol. I.

§ Inett's History of the English Church, cap. 11.



Totta, bishop of Leicester, Witta, bishop of Litchfield, Podda, bishop of Hereford, Milred, bishop of Worcester, Alwight, bishop of Lindsey, Hunferdus, bishop of Winchester, Hirwald, bishop of Sherborn, Heardulf, bishop of Dunmoeck, Egwulf, bishop of London, and Siega, bishop of Seolfsey: Ethelwald, king of the Mercians, with many of his nobles, and a vast body of inferior clergy were also present on this important occasion.\*

Towards the latter end of this century a dispute was begun about the legality of placing images in churches, which occasioned a great deal of confusion upon the continent: however, at last, the disputants in favour of them got the better of their antagonists, and they were permitted to hold their place and authority. Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, died in the year 758, and was succeeded by Bregwin the year following, who held the see for three years, and then deceased; he was succeeded by Lambertus. In the year 766, Egbert, the first archbishop of York, departed this life, with the reputation of a great scholar, and of a wise and useful prelate. During all this space, and for some time afterwards, no material change happened in the government of the English church.†

About the year 785, Offa, the victorious king of Mercia, formed the resolution of making the Mercian church independent of the see of Canterbury; so that this year, as it is thought, he obliged Lambertus, at the council of Calcuith, to consent to the division of the diocese, and forbade the bishops within his kingdom to yield any further obedience to their former metropolitan. Litchfield being then the chief city, and metropolis of Mercia, he caused the archbishopric to be there placed, and obtained the pall for the prelate from pope Adrian. After this, Offa over-ran the kingdom of the East Angles, and made it tributary to Mercia; this, as well as the whole kingdom of Mercia, he laid into the new province of Litchfield; by which change the bishops of Hereford, Worcester, Leicester, Sydnacester, Helmansted, and Dunmoeck, became the suffragans to the new archbishop of Litchfield. Higbert was chosen first archbishop, but he dying before the pall came from Rome, Adulf, the same year, succeeded him, and received the pall with the new honours.‡

No sooner had the doctrine of image worship gained ground, than another kind of adoration followed, which was equally as pernicious as the former; namely, the esteem which prevailed for the reliques of saints: and this foolish devotion spread apace, so that the histories were soon filled with strange and miraculous discoveries of the bones of martyrs, and holy men; but all of them big with absurdity, and the grossest superstition. The honour of these discoveries are chiefly attributed to the monks, who, notwithstanding all their pretended zeal and sanctity, were

\* Council. Brit. vol. I.

† Vide Inett, cap. 12.

‡ Angl. Sac. part i. fol. 429.

§ Inett, chap. xiii.

Cent. VIII. never backward in broaching the most impudent falsities, if they could thereby add a consequence to their monastery, or enrich themselves: nor is this so much to be wondered at, if we consider the taste of the times, when the whole world was gadding on religious pilgrimages to places where the most curious reliques were deposited, or the most memorable miracles had been performed. When this superstition first took place, there were many monasteries, by whose doors whole crouds would neglectfully pass, because they contained nothing that was miraculous. To give a consequence to such slighted places, wonders were soon told out, and glorious reliques discovered; by this means the croud would stop there, and by this means the holy brethren were enriched, for these votaries seldom came empty handed; so that in a little time there were no monasteries without their saints and miracles. Thus also martyrs have been divided, and twenty different bodies of one saint enshrined at as many different places. It is but too plain that the churches of England had a great share in this abominable practice.\*

The abbey of  
St. Alban's first  
founded.

About the year 793, king Offa pretended, that an angel had in a vision discovered to him where the body of St. Alban was deposited; and with great devotion the remains of a dead body were taken up at Verulam, and said to be the bones of that holy man; these were carefully deposited in a shrine of gold, enriched with pearl; also, to perpetuate the memory of this adventure, Offa, by the advice of his council, began to build a monastery, which he dedicated to that saint, at Verulam, where the bones were found, which then lost its former name, and is known to this day by that of St. Albans. This done, he went to Rome, and obtained from pope Adrian a confirmation of the privileges which he had granted to this new structure.†

Prayers and  
masses performed  
in honour of  
the dead.

It is certain, that towards the end of this century the clergy began to offer up public prayers for the spirits of deceased persons; and at the council of Calcuith, holden about the year 816, it was carried so far, as to require, that upon the death of a bishop, a tenth part of his wealth should be given to the poor; and that upon notice of his death, in every parish the congregation should resort to church, and sing thirty psalms for his soul; and that every bishop and abbot should sing six hundred psalms, and one hundred and twenty masses, manumise three slaves, give three shillings in alms, and fast thirty days. But all this was only meant as an honour paid to the deceased, if he had been a good man; for such ceremonies were never performed over the bodies of the wicked or prophane: nor did they at this time give the least intimation of their belief in a purgatory, although it is true, by such very means the door to that belief might be set open.‡

\* Vide Inett's History of the English Church, vol. I. chap. xiv.

† Mat. Paris in Vita Offa.

‡ Dr. Inett's History of the English Church, chap. xv.

This was the posture of the English church when Offa died, A. D. 796, and his decease gave a turn to the affairs of the church, as well as of the state of Mercia; but, it is true, this total change was not immediately effected. Not long after the death of Offa, the archbishopric which he had erected at Litchfield, returned again to Canterbury, where it remained. From the present time, to the end of this century, no further material alteration was made; but the revolutions which took place in the beginning of the next, in all the kingdoms of the heptarchy, must of course afford a considerable change in the church affairs throughout the whole possessions of the Saxons in Britain.

END OF THE THIRD PART OF THE CHRONICLE OF ENGLAND.

CHRONICLE



# C H R O N I C L E

## O F

# E N G L A N D.

### P A R T IV.

A DISSERTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT, LAWS, MANNERS, HABITS,  
ETC. OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS, FROM THE INVASION OF JULIUS  
CÆSAR, A. A. C. 55, TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAXONS, A. D. 449.

### C H A P. I.

*Names of the several British Nations, and where they were situated.*

ALL the best authors have now agreed, that the first inhabitants of Britain were a tribe of the Celtæ, or Gauls; their language was nearly the same; their manners, government, and religion, also agree; or, at least, were only varied in such sort as time, and a communication with other nations, must produce.

The picture which has been generally handed down to us of the Britons, is by far too rudely drawn. The Greek and Roman navigators, or merchants, who trafficked with the Britons, carried home the most shocking accounts of their ferocity, in order to advance their own fame, and excite the admiration of their countrymen. From these exaggerated reports, the ancient history of this people was penned, so that we ought not to be astonished when we find a great part of them much more civilized than we expected.

Again, sufficient reason may be given why many of our own authors have run into constant mistakes on this head; for they have unadvisedly confused the accounts of the Britons found in various authors, without attending to the different times in which those authors wrote, or in what part of Britain the people they have described might inhabit.

Even in the days of Julius Cæsar, the south-east parts of Britain had made the first, and most requisite step towards a civil settlement; and by tillage and agriculture, provided themselves with every requisite necessary for the enjoyment of life: mean while, the inland inhabitants were not so polished, but wandered about from place to place, supporting themselves by pasturage; and the northern Britons, natives of the wilds of Calidonia, for a long time afterwards were but in a state of nature, and entirely unacquainted with the refinements which had taken place in the other parts of the island.

The nations inhabiting Britain.

The different nations who inhabited Britain, and their situations, as described by our best antiquaries, are as follow:

The Danmonii; this people possessed the south-west part of Britain, and occupied those countries now called Cornwall and Devonshire; some other British tribes were also seated within these limits, as the Cossini and Ostidamii, which were particular clans of the Danmonii, and, as some think, the keepers of their flocks and herds.†

The Durotriges were situated on the eastern side of the Danmonii, and inhabited the county of Dorsetshire.‡

The Belgæ, seated to the east of the Durotriges, possessed the counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire. When Cæsar invaded Britain, part of this country was inhabited by the Segontiaci; but this people being after subdued, they were incorporated with the Belgæ.§

The Bibroci were situated on the north-east side of the Belgæ, and inhabited part of that county now named Berkshire.||

The Attrebatii were seated next to the Bibroci, inhabiting part of Berkshire, and part of Oxfordshire.\*\*

The Ancalites were situated near to the Attrebatii, and they are thought to have been only the shepherds belonging to that nation. The Ancalites inhabited those parts of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire as were most fit for pasturage.††

The Regni were seated in the counties of Surrey and Sussex.‡‡

The Cantii were next to the Regni; these possessed the country from them called Cantium, and now Kent.§§

The Trinobantes lay next to the Cantii; these inhabited the counties of Essex and Middlesex, and some part of Surrey.|||

The Cattivellauni possessed the counties of Hertford, Bedford, and Bucks. The name of this people is written several different ways; sometimes they are called Catti, Cassii, Caticuclani, Catridudani, and Caticludane.\*

† Baxter's Gloss. p. 190, & Camden's Brit.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. & Musgrave's Belg. Brit. p. 42.

|| Camden & Baxter, p. 40.

\*\* Baxter, p. 27.

†† Ibid. p. 214.

‡‡ Camd. Brit.

§§ Ibid.

||| Ibid. & Baxt. Gloss. p. 230.

\* Camd. Brit.

The Dobuni lay to the west of the Cattivellauni; they possessed Gloucestershire, and part of Oxfordshire.

The Iceni were seated to the north of the Trinobantes, and inhabited the counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Huntingdon.\*

The Coritani, or Coriceni, possessed the counties now known by the names of Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire.†

The Cornavii inhabited Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, and Cheshire. Besides the Cornavii, there was another tribe, or nation, of the Britons, seated in the above-mentioned counties; these were called the Wigantes, or Huicii.‡

The Silures; besides the two English counties of Hereford and Monmouth, this people possessed Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, and Glamorganshire, in South Wales.§

The Demetæ possessed the remaining part of South Wales, now divided into Caermarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, and Cardiganshire.||

The Ordovices were next to the Demetæ, and were situated in the counties of Montgomery, Merioneth, Caernarvon, Denbigh, and Flint, all in North Wales.\*\*

The Parisi are thought to have possessed the whole East Riding of Yorkshire.††

The Brigantes possessed almost all Yorkshire, also the counties of Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.‡‡

Before we go further into the north, it may be necessary to take notice of the Cangi, and the Attacotti, because our antiquaries have been at a loss to determine their real situation.

The Cangi are sometimes called the Ceangi, or Cangani; and the most probable conjecture concerning them, is, that "they were not a distinct nation, seated in one particular place, but such of the youth of "many different nations, as were employed in feeding the flocks and "herds of the respective tribes."§§

The Attacotti were probably some ancient northern nation,||| because they are represented as a very barbarous people, and joining with the Scots and Picts to forward the destruction of the southern parts of Britain.\*\*\*

The Otodini were seated in the counties now called Northumberland, Merse, and Lothains.†††

\* Camd. Brit.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. & Baxt. Gloss. p. 88, 89, & 90.

§ Camd. Brit.

|| Ibid.

\*\* Ibid.

†† Ibid.

‡‡ Ibid.

§§ Baxt. Gloss. p. 73, 74, 75, & 76.

||| Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I. page 183.

\*\*\* Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxvii. Hieronym. lib. ii. contra Jovianum.

††† Camd. Brit.

The Gadeni were seated to the north-west of the Otodini, and inhabited the mountainous parts of Northumberland and Tiviotdale.\*

The Selgovæ, seated to the west of the Gadeni, in the counties of Ekkdale, Annandale, and Nithsdale.†

The Novantæ inhabited the counties of Galloway, Carrick, Kyle, and Cunningham.‡

The Damnii lay further to the north, and the inhabitants were seated in the counties of Clydesdale, Renfrew, Lenox, and Stirlingshire.§

These last five nations possessed the large tract of land between the walls of Severus and Antoninus Pius; they are sometimes called by the ancient writers, as well Greek as Roman, by the general name of Mætatæ.

Those which follow, are the nations to the north beyond the wall of Antoninus Pius.

The Epidii, or Pepidii, the ancient inhabitants of the peninsula of Cantire, and of some of the adjacent islands, as also part of Argyleshire and Lorn.||

The Cerones, thought to be the inhabitants of Lochabar, and part of Rosse.\*\*

The Carnonacæ possessed that part of Rosse, called Aftenshire.††

The Carini, the inhabitants of Lochbey.‡‡

The Cornabii inhabited the most northern parts of Britain, called Strathnavern.§§

The Mertæ were seated somewhere about the north-west parts of Sutherland.||||

The Logi seem to have possessed the sea-coast of Sutherland.\*\*

The Cantæ, perhaps seated on the north side of the Tayne firth.†††

The Caledonii appear to have inhabited a very extensive tract of country, reaching from Lochfern on the west, to the firth of Tayne on the east, including Badenoch, Braidalbain, the inland parts of the shires of Murray, Bamf, Aberdeen, and Perth.†††

The ancient writers call all the northern nations, beyond the wall of Antoninus Pius, by the general name of the Caledonii; because, perhaps, this tribe was by far the biggest, and the most powerful.

The Zexali inhabited the sea-coasts of Aberdeenshire.§§§

\* Baxt. Gloss. p. 126.

† Ibid. 215.

‡ Camd. Brit.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid.

\*\* Horf. Brit. Rom. p. 368.

†† Ibid. 366. & Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I.

‡‡ Ibid. Ibid.

§§ Camd. Brit.

|||| Horfby, Brit. Rom. p. 372, & Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I.

\*\* Ibid. Ibid.

††† Baxt. Gloss. Brit. p. 65.

‡‡‡ Dr. Henry, ut sup.

§§§ Ibid. & Horf. Brit. p. 369.



The Vacomagi probably possessed part of Murray, Athol, Mearns, and Angus.\*

The Horesti most likely was a bordering nation, afterwards incorporated with the Vacomagi.†

The Venicontes were the ancient inhabitants of Fife.‡

## C H A P. II.

### *Constitution, Government, and Laws of the Britons.*

IT is universally agreed upon, that Britain was under a monarchical government at the time of the Roman invasion, and most likely had been so for a long time before. The kingdom was divided (as we have seen) into many small nations, or tribes, every one of which had at least one king, and often more. The extent of the power which each of these monarchs might possess in their several districts, cannot at present be investigated, but it is very certain that it was not unlimited; for the common people of Britain seem to have enjoyed more liberty than those of Gaul,§ and having once a taste of freedom, it could be no easy task to impose the yoke of despotism upon them; especially when we consider that they were a people inured to war, and sought not the refinements of a luxurious or idle life. Besides, another considerable check upon the power of the prince, was, the great authority of the druids; who not only officiated as the ministers of the gods, in cases of religion, but claimed a great share also in the civil government. The power of raising forces for the prosecution of wars, it is true, seems to have been invested in the king; but at the same time, it does not appear that they declared a war, or undertook any great expedition, without previously consulting their nobles, and the druids also: nor were the resolutions of the chiefs in such councils always conformable to the will of the sovereign; on the contrary, sometimes they appear to have carried the point against his declared opinion.|| If then, when war and danger called for the assistance of their monarch, his power was so limited, we may justly conclude, that it was circumscribed by straiter bounds in time of peace, when there was no disturbance to demand his protection. The

Britain originally a monarchical government, and the power of the kings.

\* Dr. Henry, ut sup.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Dion. Cassius, lib. lxxv.

|| Agreeable to this, is the excuse which Ambiorix, king of the Eburones, a people of Gaul, made to Cæsar for having at-

faulted his camp, which he declared was not done by his order or consent, but by the compulsion of the state: for such was the nature of his government, that the people had as much power over him as he had over his people. Cæsar's Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 23.

The Gadeni were seated to the north-west of the Orodini, and inhabited the mountainous parts of Northumberland and Tiviotdale.\*

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faulted his camp, which he declared was not done by his order or consent, but by the compulsion of the state: for such was the nature of his government, that the people had as much power over him as he had over his people. Cæsar's Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 25.

British kings of some nations are thought to have been more powerful and absolute than others; those in the north, and more uncultivated parts of Britain, were the princes who possessed the least authority.

A general chosen from their kings, and when,

All those tribes above-mentioned, with their monarchs, were quite independent of each other, and, incited by jealousy or ambition, continually warring upon one another's territories: to this restless and jealous temper they owed their final ruin; for though (as their custom was when any foreign danger threatened the general state) they had upon Cæsar's arrival chosen a chief over them all,\* yet so prevalent were their animosities, that even the impending ruin which hung over the island could not keep them together in unanimity. This general, chosen from their monarchs on these important occasions, only enjoyed his authority, at best, as long as the danger which they were fearful of continued to threaten the state: so that there was no supremacy amongst them. It is true, indeed, that sometimes a prince might by marriage, or the fortune of war, obtain the dominion of two or more of these little kingdoms, yet after his death they were presently divided amongst his children. The rules of succession were not always strictly adhered to, but when a king died, and left a son old enough, and able to take the government upon him, he succeeded of course; but the father might disinherit his children, if he was so inclined.† When a monarch died without any male issue, his wife or daughter succeeded him in the kingdom.‡ If he left two sons, his possessions were generally divided betwixt them.§

The revenues of the British kings,

The revenues of the British kings are not so well known, or the sources from whence they were derived: the king, without doubt, possessed the greatest estate of any in his dominion; but besides this, it is highly probable, that he might have the profits of certain lands, for the support of his dignity, and maintainance of his followers. For carrying on the public business, taxes were levied upon the subjects, and every one obliged to pay his share, the druids excepted, on whom no burthensome imposition could be laid;|| and the Britons, all of them, contributed cheerfully to these payments, so they were not too exorbitant and distressing.\*\* What greatly contributed to the enriching of a king, was, the share which he had in the spoils of war: and these chiefly consisted of rings and chains of gold, with great variety of massy ornaments of the same metal.††

\* Cæsar, *Bel. Gal. lib. v.* & vide Tacitus, *Vita Agricola*.

† Thus Cunobellinus disinherited and banished his son Admimus. See page 12.

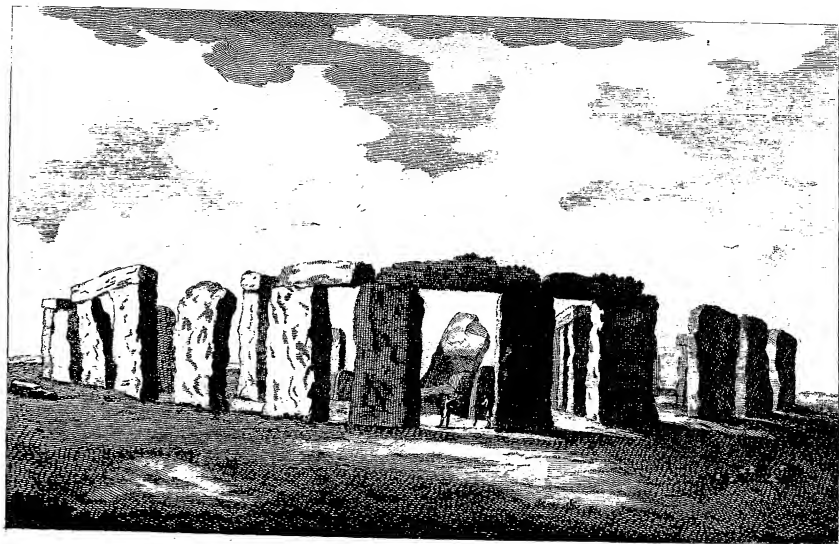
‡ This is plain from the cases of Cartimandua and Boudicea. See the *Chronicle*, part I.

§ After the death of Cunobolin, his dominions were divided between his two sons, &c. Vide page 13.

|| Cæsar, *Bel. Gal. lib. vi.*

\*\* Tacit. *Vita Agric.*

†† When Caractacus was carried before the emperor Claudius, the rings of gold, and other ornaments, which he had won from the neighbouring states, were publicly exposed. Vide page 18. And the riches of a British king are described by that same unfortunate monarch, in his famous speech to Claudius. *Ibid.*



*Poltrich the great circle of stones in  
Oxfordshire.*

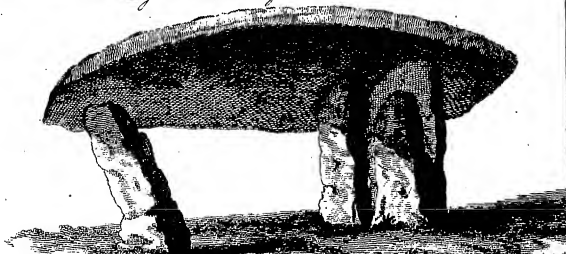


*Hets Coity House in Kent the Monument of Catigern.*

*A. Round Cromlech  
near Poltrich.*



*The large Cromlech at Tregon in Cornwall.*



The kings of the Britons had no share in the legislative part of the government; the druids possessed the sole authority of making, explaining, and executing the laws: for they taught, that the laws were not to be considered as the decrees of princes, but the commands of their gods; therefore, the violation of the law could not be punished as a crime against their king, or state, but against Heaven; for this cause, when criminals were put to death, they were sacrificed to the gods, and not to the justice of their country.\* The druids had most likely a complete system of laws; but as they were never committed to writing, and were only known in their full extent by those priests themselves, we have but very slender tracings of them remaining.

In the administration of justice, the druids never required the assistance of the secular power; they executed all their sentences by their own authority, whether they were to inflict stripes, or even take away the life of the offender. Their authority they supported by the fear of excommunication, which was inflicted on any who refused quietly to submit to their judgments. Their courts of judicature they held in the open air, in places appointed for that purpose; and it is thought that there was one of these courts at least in every state.†

Such was the power of the druids; but it seems that delinquents might appeal to judgment of the arch-druid in any case which was difficult to be determined in the provincial courts: thus, once every year a general meeting was held at some appointed place, where the provincial druids did attend, and the proceedings of the year were examined and discussed before the arch-druid, who then pronounced the final sentence.‡ In what part of Britain this grand assembly was held, cannot easily be ascertained; but when any one shall behold the ancient stupendous structure which yet remains upon Salisbury Plains, called Stone Henge, he will instantly conclude that it was erected for some important purpose; and for what more likely than for this, built, as it is, upon an extensive plain, where the surrounding multitude might easily be assembled together, and left open all around, that the judges might be seen by every one? If we grant this, then the lesser circles of stones which abound in this kingdom may have been the places appointed for the provincial courts; such an one, without doubt, was the circle of stones, now called Rollich, in Oxfordshire.§

But to return:—The laws of marriage amongst the Britons certainly were, that no man should have more than one wife, or any woman more than one husband;|| yet it is said, that their women were not so chaste

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi. Diod. Sic. l. v. Strabo, lib. iv. † Cæf. ut sup. ‡ Ibid.

§ That the reader may have the better idea of these ancient remains, we have subjoined two plates; the one representing Stone Henge; and the other Rollich. The reader is also referred to the first volume of the *Hojiba Angel cynnan*, or

the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants of England, page 13, where he will find this opinion still more fully explained.

|| This may be proved by the story of Cartimandua, who brought herself into great disgrace for violating her marriage-bed. Vide Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 9.

and scrupulous as they ought to be, for one of them would frequently cohabit with ten or twelve men, especially if they were near relations to each other.\* Husbands and fathers had absolute authority over the persons of their wives and children, and might put them to death if they thought they deserved it.† They also, doubtless, had particular laws for the succession of their children, though at the present time they are not to be discovered.

Various laws.

Their penal laws, as well as the laws for the preservation of their property, are not known; but in respect to the latter, as cattle were their chief wealth, no doubt severe punishments were inflicted on such as stole, or hurt them. Their law of evidence is equally uncertain; oaths were common amongst them, but they were of different forms, according to the different states, the people of every nation having a method of taking an oath, peculiar to themselves. In cases of suspicion, where proof could not be obtained, torture was used to make the delinquents confess their guilt.‡

Uncertain whether ordeals were amongst the Britons.

Though we have no mention made of ordeals amongst the druids, yet the appealing to Heaven for evidence was so very common with all nations, that we cannot but suppose the druids, who were for promoting every kind of superstition, and advancing every thing that could confirm their own authority, made use of such applications to their deities, though their form and the manner of them is not to be discovered at present.

### C H A P. III.

#### *The Changes in the British Government occasioned by the Romans.*

No alteration in the government till the time of Claudius.

THE two expeditions of Julius Cæsar produced no change in the British state, or government, which remained in its original form all over the island until the conquests of Claudius. The Romans

\* Thus Cæsar reports, and his account is confirmed by an anecdote related by Dion Cassius; but a modern author suspects, that they may have been deceived by the appearance of things; “for, (says he) the houses of the Britons were not like ours at present, nor the Romans in those times, divided into several apartments, but consisted of one round circular room, or hall, with a fire in the middle, around which the whole family, men, women, and children, all slept on the floor, on one continued bed of straw or rushes; this excited unfavourable suspicions in the

“eyes of strangers, accustomed to a more decent way of living; but those suspicions are most probably without foundation.” Dr. Henry’s History of Britain, vol. I. chap. vii. But if this is true, why do we hear of the chastity of the ancient Germans, from Cæsar, who lived in the same crowded manner? Why were they not liable to the same suspicious censure as the Britons? But I doubt the accusation was but too well grounded.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

‡ Ibid.



at first began to form an alliance with as many of the British states as they could, in order to hinder the combination of the chiefs, which would have been very prejudicial to their designs; for this reason, they pretended the greatest friendship for such as espoused their cause, and instead of decreasing, added to their dominions: but at the same time, under the artful insinuation of protecting them from the assaults of their enemies, and preserving the peace of their state, they deprived these unsuspecting monarchs of all their real authority.\*

As soon as they had obtained firm footing in the land, they planted colonies of veteran soldiers to secure their conquests, and be a constant check upon the inhabitants. The first colony which they established here, was that at Camulodunum, which city had formerly been the chief seat of Cunobelinus. Also, to gain the favour of the multitude, they made free cities in Britain, the inhabitants of which were allowed the same privileges as the citizens of Rome: to these places flocked the chief part of the Britons, who were adherents and promoters of the designs of the Romans. Of this sort were London and Verulam, at the time of the revolt under Boudicea, queen of the Icenians.†

The Romans soon found the difficulty, or perhaps the impossibility, of altering the course of the British government, or introducing their own laws amongst the natives, whilst the druids retained their power and authority; and the disturbances which those crafty priests were constantly fomenting, in order to support their declining fame, obliged the conquerors, contrary to their usual custom, not only to destroy them, but to abolish by force the superstitious doctrines which they had inculcated, as contrary to the policy and government which they (the Romans) were desirous of imposing upon the Britons.‡

The druids removed from the state, and deprived of all their authority, and the affections of the people weaned by degrees from their doctrines, the whole constitution and form of government amongst the Britons underwent a total change, and the laws of the Romans were established in every part of the island that was subjected to them.

The government of the Roman province in Britain was committed to the care of a president, or imperial legate, whose power was very extensive; for the whole war, and management of the Roman troops, as well as full direction of all civil affairs, were committed to him. We often find these men abused their authority, and became offensive to the natives: the emperor Hadrian being convinced of this evil in or about the year 131, by edict abridged the power of the presidents of conquered provinces, and laid their conduct under several necessary restrictions.§

There was yet another officer of great consequence appointed in the Roman provinces, named the imperial procurator, who was in some

Methods which the Romans took to secure their conquests.

The druids destroyed, and why.

The Roman laws established in Britain.

The president, or governor of Britain.

The imperial procurator.

\* Vide Tacit. Annal.

† Ibid. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

‡ Suet. in Vita Claud.

Vol. I.

§ Hist. des Emp. par Tillemount, tom. II. page 214.

measure independent of the president; he had the chief direction in the collecting and managing of the imperial revenues; he also often acted as a spy upon the governor of the province, and informed the emperor if he found any thing amiss in his conduct. These two officers, when they agreed together, might not only plunder and distress the provincials, but even rob the emperor and the state of their proper revenues.\*

The vicar of  
Britain.

These two continued for a long time to be the chief officers employed by the Romans in Britain; but Constantine the Great established a prefect in Gaul, under whom an officer, called the vicar of Britain, presided in this island, and his authority extended over all the Roman provinces here; his residence was chiefly at London, where he lived in great pomp; his court was composed of several officers for the transacting the business of his government; as a principal officer of the agents, a principal secretary, two chief auditors of accounts, a master of the prisons, a notary, a secretary for dispatches, an assistant, under assistants, clerks for appeals, serjeants, and inferior officers. Appeals might be made to him from the governors of the provinces, and from him to the prefect of Gaul. He bore the title of His Excellence;† the ensigns of his office were a book of instructions in a green cover, and five castles on the triangular form of the island, representing the five provinces under his jurisdiction.‡

Britain divided  
into provinces.

Until the days of Severus all the Roman possessions in Britain made but one province, which that emperor divided into two. In after times, when the authority of the Romans was extended by new conquests, and all that tract of country subjected to them which lay between the two walls, they divided the whole into five provinces, the names and extent of which are as follow:

Five provinces  
of Britain.

I. Flavia Cæsariensis; this province extended from the land's end in Cornwall, to the south foreland in Kent, and was bounded on the south by the English channel, on the north by the Bristol channel, the Severn, and the Thames. It comprehended these nations,—the Danmonii, Du-rotiges, Belgæ, Attrebatii, Regni, and Cantii; which are now Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Suffex, and Kent.

II. Britannia Prima, the second province, was bounded on the south by the Thames, on the east by the British ocean, on the north by the

\* It is of these two officers that the Britons are complaining in the Life of Agricola. "In time past (say they) we had but a single king, we are now burthened by two; one of these, the governor general, who tyrannizes over our persons and lives; and the other, the imperial procurator, who embezzles our substance and fortunes: both equally pernicious to us, whether they are quarrelling

"amongst themselves, or whether united  
"by good intelligence and unanimity." Against them the one employed his predatory bands, as did the other his centurions, and their men; and both exercised violence alike, both treated them with equal insults and contempt. Tacit. Vita Agricola.

† Spectabilis in orig.

‡ Notitia Imperii; cap. 49.

Humber, and on the west by the Severn. It comprehended the tribes of the Dobuni, Cativelaneni, Trinobantes, Iceni, and Coritani; which are now Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire.

III. *Britannia Secunda*, the third province, was bounded on the south by the Bristol channel and the Severn, on the west by St. George's channel, on the north by the Irish sea, and on the east by *Britannia Prima*. This province contained the countries of the Cornavii, Silures, Demetæ, and Ordovices; which are now Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Herefordshire, Radnorshire, Brecknockshire, Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, Caermarthenshire, Pembroke-shire, Cardiganshire, Montgomeryshire, Merionethshire, Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire, and Flintshire.

IV. *Maxima Cæsariensis*, the fourth province, was bounded on the south by the Humber, on the east by the German ocean, on the west by the Irish sea, and on the north by the wall of Severus. This province contained two nations, the *Parisi* and the *Brigantes*; which now make the counties of York, Durham, Lancaster, Cumberland, and Northumberland.

V. *Valentia* was the fifth, and most northern province of Britain; it was erected A. D. 369, by Theodosius, and called by this name in honour of the emperor Valens. This province contained all that country between the walls of Severus and Antoninus Pius, and was inhabited by several British nations, called by the general name of *Mæatæ*.\*

These five provinces of Britain had each of them its governor, and a court composed of proper officers for the dispatch of business. The governors of the two most northern provinces, *Valentia* and *Maxima Cæsariensis*, were of consular degree; but those of the other three were only styled presidents. By the vicar of Britain, and these five governors of the provinces, all civil affairs were regulated, justice administered, and the taxes and public revenues of all kinds collected.†

After the Romans had subdued the Britons, in order to proceed with the greater security, they took their arms from them; also, they impressed such of their youth as were strong, and able to bear the fatigues of a camp, and sent them over to the continent, where they might be serviceable to the Roman state; by this means the force of the provincials was constantly kept within bounds, and their conquerors had nothing to fear from their discontents: another method, and the most natural one, which the Romans took to secure their conquests, was, to erect a multitude of forts and strong-holds in the most advantageous parts of the island, in which were placed garrisons of soldiers, for they kept a constant

\* Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I. fol. 231 & 232.

† *Notitia Imperii*, cap. 49. Heinseccius Antiq. Rom. tom. IV. page 258.

standing army, which was a great burthen to the Britons; but at the same time, these political measures prevented their frequent breaking out into open rebellions, and gave occasion quickly to subdue them when they did so. At the time in which the Romans held the five provinces in Britain, they are supposed to have had an army consisting of nineteen thousand two hundred foot, and one thousand seven hundred horse; but as the intestine discords in the empire required assistance, these were by degrees diminished, and at last they all forsook the island.\*

Taxes laid upon  
the Britons.

The conquest of South Britain effected, and the Romans having made their footing firm, the chief cause of their undertaking was next attended to, and this was the levying of taxes; which seems to have belonged to the office of procurator or overseer. These, whilst they were collected with equity, were cheerfully complied with by the provincials.

Taxes on corn,  
&c.

The Britons were obliged to pay a tax of their grain, which also they were constrained to carry to a considerable distance, that it might be lodged in the places appointed for its reception; this was a great grievance to them, but it was remitted by Agricola in the very first year of his government.† It is thought, that of the corn, as much as might be necessary for the army was taken in kind; for the remainder the husbandman paid a certain stipulated sum. A tax was laid upon their orchards, which was heavier than the former, because there was not much trouble attending their cultivation; a fifth part of their produce is what was generally exacted.

Taxes on pa-  
stures, &c.

Another tax, called Scriptura, and levied on the pasture grounds; this exaction was very oppressive: when the husbandmen could not raise coin enough to answer the demand, they were obliged to sell their cattle, or else borrow money of the wealthy Romans, to defray it. Seneca alone is reported to have lent the Britons, on some such occasion, the astonishing sum of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds, which being rigorously demanded, at a time when they were unable to pay, was one of the grand causes of the revolt under Boudicea. Besides this tax, it is highly probable that certain pasture lands were set apart for the forage of the horses belonging to the Roman soldiers.

Various other  
taxes,

A tax was likewise levied upon the cattle of the Britons: this was most likely taken in kind, for the support of the soldiers. Mines were taxed according to the value of their produce; also every kind of merchandize in proportion to its worth. A poll tax, or a certain payment exacted from every individual, was imposed; and another payment when any person died, before the dead corpse could be buried.‡ The exact sums

\* Vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit.

† Tacit. Vita Agric.

‡ Boudicea, in her famous speech to the Britons before the battle with Suetonius, takes notice of these two taxes in particular: speaking of the Romans, "Have they

"not deprived us (says she) of our most  
"valuable possessions, and do we not pay  
"grievous taxes for what is left? Besides  
"all those heavy impositions on our estates  
"and goods, are not our persons taxed?  
"Do we not pay for the very heads on our  
"shoulders?"

sums which were gathered from these taxations are not to be discovered; however, we learn, from various passages of history, that they were very oppressive to the inhabitants. Besides the impositions already mentioned, the Romans had a great variety of other taxes, with which they burthened their provinces; such as those laid on houses, pillars, hearths, animals of several kinds, urine, and the like, which at some time or other most likely were forced upon the Britons; for we must not imagine that all these impositions were laid upon their backs immediately upon the subduing of this people, nor yet all of them at one time.

This is a short sketch of the Roman policy and government in Britain, which overturned the former customs of the natives, and also ended in their ruin; for by this means we find them brought up in ignorance of the use of arms, deprived of their youth, and such as were able to protect the state from their foes, so that when the Romans took their leave of the island, they left the provincials in a much more deplorable condition than even their former servitude had been. Every man was now fearful of the approaching danger, and without regard of others, followed the dictates of his own inordinate desires, so that the whole community were involved in a dreadful and pernicious anarchy. It is true, their common miseries soon obliged them, in some sort, to restore their former mode of government; accordingly they elected kings, but were either so unfortunate in their choice, or capricious in their resolutions, that they soon dethroned them again, and set up others still worse than the former: this was their condition when the total subversion of their state was threatened by the northern insurgents. This caused them to summon a general council, in which Vortigern seems to have borne the chief sway, who, by his inadvertent advice, completed the ruin of the wretched Britons.\*

*The state of the Britons when the Romans left them.*

#### C H A P. IV.

##### *The State of Architecture amongst the Britons.*

TO trace the origin of this art from its first commencement, we thought to take a view of mankind in a state of nature, when their wants were only such as were dictated by instinct, for the preservation of life. Food was the first object of their pursuit, and probably the very

*Gradual improvements in architecture.*

" shoulders? Why dwell I on these exactions  
" from those that are living? Even the  
" dead are burthened with taxes! You all  
" well know that we are obliged to pay

" for the bodies of our deceased friends."  
Xiphil. ex Dion. in Nerone.

\* Gildas Hist. & vide page 60, of this volume.

next

next that of seeking some retreat from the inclemency of the seasons. In the winter they retired to the holes and caverns of the earth, from whence issuing forth in the summer, the shade of large trees and thickets, or such like habitations less secure, might suffice. Their first attempt at architecture would be naturally the erecting small huts, composed of stakes driven into the earth, and interwoven with wattles, or pliant branches of trees; this homely cot they covered with green boughs, to defend them from the rain. The idea of a dwelling suggested, their next step might be to plaster over the wattles with clay, to prevent the penetration of the wind, and to make the dwelling warmer. Such is the state in which we find the habitations of the ancient Germans, in the earliest accounts which are handed down to us; and even at that unpolished period we find them not a little proud of procuring such clay as was of a glossy nature, to make their walls withal; and by mixing a variety of colours together, produced a kind of pictures upon them.\* On the other hand, the Britons are said to have affected a plain colour; for this cause they white-washed the clay after it was dry with chalk. The next improvement that they made in their habitations, was to thatch them with reeds, or straw, as better fence against the rain than the boughs which they succeeded. After this, they set about more substantial buildings, making a frame of wood, instead of the wattles. In this state the domestic structures were in Britain about the time of Cæsar's arrival; all of them built in a circular form, and the roof thatched up round like a cone;† in the middle of which an aperture was left for the smoke to issue out: this was the construction of the common houses; those of the better sort are said to have been of stone.‡

\* Towns of the Britons, how constructed.

At this time the Britons had no idea of building houses contiguous with each other, so as to form regular streets in what were called their towns; but they were built at some distance one from the other. Their habitations were generally near the banks of a river, for the convenience of water, or in the woods and forests, where abundance of forage might be found for their cattle: the most convenient of these places was chosen by the prince, who there appointed his residence; and his followers and dependants made their habitations as near as they could conveniently to that of their sovereign, and also erected stalls for their cattle within the same limit.§ A town or city thus made, they fortified all round with a ditch, and mound of earth, or rampart; and if any danger was feared, they blocked up all the entrances with trees cut down, and heaped one on the other, without having the branches lopped from them.|| Other towns were of slighter construction, and only fortified with trees felled around, wherein hasty huts were made for the occupiers, and others for their herds; these were not intended for long continu-

\* Tacit. de Morib. German.

† Diod. Sic. lib. v.

‡ Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*.

§ Diod. Sic.

|| Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

ance, being chiefly inhabited by the inland Britons, whose living depended only on their cattle, and so were under the necessity of being continually removing for the benefit of pasturage.\* All this must be understood of the southern division of the island; for when the Romans had settled here, and advanced the arts to a considerable degree, the northern Britons were still in a state of barbarity, and dwelt in holes and caverns amongst the mountains, or at best in a sort of rude huts or tents.†

When one considers the low state of the arts, even in the southern parts of Britain, at the time of Cæsar's arrival, and the ignorance of the natives in the improvement of architecture, we can but admire that curious remaining proof of their indefatigable labours, Stone Henge; and we are naturally struck with wonder at beholding those vast stones set up in so much order, by a people who scarcely afforded time to build even tolerable dwellings for themselves. But we must look upon this as a place constructed for some great and important purpose, which was most likely planned out and executed under the immediate direction of the druids, who were the only masters of the arts and sciences at that time. Spirited up by the advice of the priests, they might willingly assist in the forwarding such an edifice, whether it was intended as a temple for their gods, or a place of public judicature.‡

Stone Henge considered.

The Romans, immediately they had got footing upon the island, made haste to improve the dwellings of those provincials who had espoused their cause, and formed their towns into regular cities. Thus, as early as the year of our Lord 61, when the Roman colony of Camulodunum was destroyed by Boudicea and her army, it appears to have been a large well-built town, in which there was a temple adorned with statues, a theatre, and other public edifices.§ At the same time also, we find that London and Verulam were large, populous, and beautiful cities.||

The Romans introduce the art of architecture very early.

All these improvements, it is true, were performed by the Romans themselves; but by degrees the knowledge of architecture diffused itself amongst the native Britons, who began to have a taste for peace and repose; and these favourable inclinations the crafty conquerors sought not to check, but, on the contrary, forwarded as much as lay in their power, exhorting and assisting them in building temples to the honour of the gods, houses for themselves, and places for public assemblies, and commended their diligence in such pursuits; because by this means their affections for liberty were lulled asleep, and they submitted with the greater readiness to the yoke which was imposed upon them; for having

The Britons learn this art of the Romans.

\* Strabo, lib. iii.

† Herodian, lib. iii.

‡ See the *Hondd Angel cynnan*, or the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants of England, vol. I.

§ Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10. Xi. phil. ex Dion. Nic. in Neron.

|| Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

once a taste of splendour and luxury, the love of freedom was forgot, their minds were effeminated, and the heroic ardour of their ancestors ceased to glow in their breasts.\*

Britain famous  
for artificers.

This was the state of the arts in the southern parts of Britain during the government of Julius Agricola; and the provincials profited so much from the instructions of their preceptors, that when Constantius Chlorus rebuilt the city of Antun, in Gaul, about the year 296, the chief workmen whom he employed were sent from Britain, which at that time abounded with the best artificers.†

The decline of  
architecture a-  
mongst the Bri-  
tons.

In the beginning of the fourth century the art of architecture was in its zenith in Britain; from that period it lost ground apace, so that before the final departure of the Romans the Britons were such miserable artificers, that they were obliged to repair the wall of Antoninus Pius with turfs, not having any workmen amongst them, who understood enough of masonry, to repair it with stone.‡ If this was true, we must recollect at the same time, that it could be only applicable to the inhabitants of the very northern province of Valentia; and in these parts the arts never flourished to that degree which they did in the south, where, no doubt, even at this very time, some faint traces of their ancient skill remained.

The Romans  
leaving Britain  
the ruin of this  
art.

The Romans taking their final leave, the architecture of the Britons fell at once into decay; for the ferocious plunderers, the Scots and Picts, breaking out from their retreats where they had hid themselves, over-run a great part of the kingdom, and the unhappy provincials flying before them, left their cities to their mercy, who beat down and destroyed the principal places wherever they came: and after this, the arrival of the Saxons determined their fate; for that fierce people taking possession of what remained to the southern Britons, those miserable beings were driven again to their caves and dens, which had been possessed before by their barbarous progenitors.§

The arts of car-  
pentry and ma-  
sonry.

To what height the knowledge of carpentry and masonry were carried before the arrival of the Romans, cannot be determined; yet their houses and utensils of husbandry, as ploughs, harrows, and the like, also all their necessary implements for the manufacture of cloth, required the hand of the carpenter to complete; but the greatest proof of their skill in this art, is, the chariots that they used in war, which must have been very neatly and strongly put together, to sustain so many violent motions as we are told they did, and yet to run so lightly, and be so easily turned from place to place.¶ That the Britons had more than a mean skill in masonry, Stone Henge may clearly prove; and also, that they were well acquainted with various mathematical engines, necessary

\* Tacit. Vita Agric.

† Eumenii Panegy. viii.

‡ Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. i. cap. 12.

§ Vide page 56 of this volume, & infra.

¶ Vide Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. iv.



for the moving and raising prodigious weights.\* By the Romans these arts were improved, and on their final departure they sunk again with the ruined state of Britain.

## C H A P. V.

*The Art of War, and Military Discipline of the Britons.*

THE natural propensity to arms, and the restless tempers of the Britons, led them frequently to the field: jealousies and disputes amongst neighbouring nations, which were continually breaking out, kept up a constant internal war with each other; and this martial spirit was diffused throughout the whole island, so that all the inhabitants, the druids alone excepted, were trained up to war, and taught betimes the use of arms.†

The Britons well acquainted with the art of war.

The armies of the Britons were not divided equally into distinct corps, containing each of them a fixed and certain number of soldiers, like those of the Romans and more polished nations; but every clan or family fought in a distinct band, under the command of the head of that clan;‡ the advantage arising from this method of arrangement, was, that the family bands were united by the strongest ties of love and friendship, as well as the most solemn oaths; and it is natural to imagine they would fight with the greater alacrity, whilst on the valour of each individual depended in some measure the life of his father, his brother, his son, or his nearest relations. All the several clans which composed a nation, fought under the conduct of the king of that nation; and when a public war required a combination of the forces of several nations, one of the kings, most famous for his valour and military conduct, was chosen from the rest, as chief general, and invested with the supreme command.§ This sound policy, had it been well attended to, would have protracted, if not entirely prevented, the Roman conquest. What gave the conquerors such speedy possession in the island, was, the divisions and discords amongst the natives themselves; for, instead of continuing firm in their combinations, and unanimous in their resolutions and conduct, every chief was jealous of his fellow, and whole communities dissenting from each other, divided their forces, and fell an easy prey into the hands of their more politic enemies.||

The armies of the Britons, how composed.

\* Stukeley's Stone Henge, and Borlase's Hist. of Cornwall.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

‡ Tacit. Vita Agric.

Vol. I.

§ Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. Tacit. Annal. lib. xii. cap. 8. Xiphil. ex Dion. in Neron.

|| Tacit. Vita Agric.

Three kinds of  
British troops.

The British troops consisted of three kinds of soldiers; as their infantry, their cavalry, and those that fought from the war chariots.

The infantry,  
their arms and  
habit.

The infantry constituted the most material part of the army of the Britons;\* those of the more southern and improved parts of the island were habited like the Belgic Gauls, with whom they were very conversant; their dress consisted of a woollen tunic, thickly wove with coarse harsh wool, over which they wore a kind of cassock or cloak,† reaching down a little below the hips; their legs and thighs were covered with close garments, called Bracæ; on their heads they wore helmets of brass, ornamented at top with horns of the same metal, or else with birds or beasts, rudely carved out; some had iron breast-plates, full of hooks, others again fought without; they wore a long sword or spatha, hanging obliquely cross their right thighs, and suspended from a girdle by chains of iron or brass. They also bore in their hand a large dart, whose shaft of iron was a cubit in length, and near as broad as two hands put together,‡ and shield proportioned according to the stature and strength of the bearer, which was commonly ornamented with various rude figures.§ The foot soldiers amongst the inland Britons were more lightly armed, wearing garments made of the skins of beasts,|| and bound round their middles, carrying small shields on their left arms; their chief offensive weapon was a spear; besides which, it is likely they might bear swords, either of iron or brass.\*\* The Calidonians, and other northern nations, usually fought naked, having neither breast-plates, helmets, or any other defensive armour, except a small light shield, or target; and their offensive weapons were long broad pointless swords, suspended by iron chains; and short spears, with round balls of brass at the end, with which they used to make a noise before an engagement, to frighten the horses of their enemies;†† In this state were they found, when Severus entered their territories, A. D. 207. To make amends for their want of armour, they were swift of foot, and very expert in all their motions; and the chief reason for their going naked, was, that garments and heavy accoutrements would have been burthen some to them in their marches; for, in their retreats they would pass the bogs and fens, and swim over deep waters with surprizing alertness, so that it was impossible for those who were heavy armed to overtake, or even pursue them.‡‡

The cavalry of  
the Britons.

The cavalry of the Britons were mounted upon small, but hardy, mettlesome horses, which they managed with the utmost dexterity; their arms, offensive and defensive, were chiefly the same with those of

\* Tacit. Vita Agric.

† Ταγρις παδωλοισ, cassocks of rods.

Diod. Sic. lib. v.

‡ See this soldier delineated, plate V. of this volume.

§ Diod. Sic. lib. v. & Strabo, lib. iv. &c.

|| Cæs. Bel. Gal.

\*\* See this soldier, plate V. the middle figure in the plate.

†† See a delineation of this Briton also, plate V.

‡‡ Tacit. Vita Agric. Xiphil. ex Dio. Nic. in Sever. Herodian, lib. iii.

the infantry, for they would often dismount from their horses, and fight on foot.

Those who fought from the war chariots seem to have been composed of the chief people, and very flower of their youth; they were so expert by long custom, that they could manage their horses at their pleasure, drive them full speed down steep hills, turn them in the shortest compass, run upon the pole of the chariot, and with the greatest nimbleness return to their seat.\* The most honourable person amongst them took the reins, and guided the chariot; and under his conduct his friends or followers fought.†

The chariot fighters.

The war chariots of the Britons were of three sorts, all different; as the Covinus, the Rheda, and the Eshedum.‡ The first of these was armed with hooks and scythes;§ this is thought to have been a light kind of chariot, made upon such a construction as only to contain the charioteer; for their principal use depended upon their force and rapidity, as all the execution was done with the sharp hooks and scythes which were made fast about it: the others, the Rheda and the Eshedum, are supposed to have been larger than the Covinus, and without hooks; these, besides the charioteer, contained some few warriors, armed with lances, which they threw at the enemy with great skill as the chariots passed rapidly by.|| The charioteers would drive upon their opponents, and by the sudden shock break the ranks, and put an army into confusion; when they were entangled amongst a troop of horse, the warriors, leaping from the chariots, would fight on foot; mean time the charioteer, watching diligently all their motions, placed himself to such advantage, that if they should be oppressed by numbers, they might secure their retreat to the chariots, and elude the pursuits of the foe.\*\* We may easily conceive that the number of war chariots in Britain must have been immense, when we consider that Casibellanus, after he had disbanded the greater part of his army, retained still four thousand of them; and at the same time we may observe, that the use of them was universal amongst all the nations of the Britons.††

Different sorts of war chariots.

When they drew their forces up in order of battle, they usually placed their infantry in the center, in distinct lines; and as they always chose a

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. iv.

† Tacit. Vita Agric.

‡ Cæf. Bel. Gal. Tacit. Annal. & Vita Agric. Xiphil. ex Dion. in Neron. Pomp. Mela, lib. iii. cap. 6, &c. &c.

§ Mela, lib. iii. cap. 6.

|| Vide Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I.

\*\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. iv.

†† Ibid. lib. v. It may here be added, that Tacitus writing a considerable time after Julius Cæsar, says only, "That some of the nations of the Britons used to

"fight in chariots." We may remember, that at the time in which Tacitus lived, the Romans had secured their conquests in the southern parts of Britain, and that Julius Agricola, father-in-law to that historian, as he himself declares, had introduced the Roman usages with great success; so that no wonder he speaks only of some of them, namely, those who inhabited the north, since in his time the southern Britons had declined their use. Vide Tacit. in Vita Agricola.

Manner of arranging the armies used by the Britons.

rising ground for the field of battle, these lines were placed one above another, each at a little distance from the former, so that the whole of their army might be seen, and their appearance be more formidable to the enemy.\* Each distinct corps consisted of the warriors of a clan, and were commanded by their own chief. The cavalry and chariots were placed on the wings on either side, or else in the front of the army, where in flying parties they drove up and down the field, and began the engagement by repeated skirmishes. On their rear were placed their waggons and baggage, which served as a kind of blockade, to prevent the enemy's attacking them in that quarter; and frequently in their waggons their wives and children were placed, to be spectators of the bravery of their protectors; and they, on their parts, with repeated cries and yells, inspired the warriors with fresh spirit, and constantly put them in mind that the lives and safety of their dearest friends must depend on their valour.†

Speeches before the battle was begun.

Before the engagement was begun, the general always went from place to place, and harangued his army with a moving speech, exhorting them all to fight gloriously for their lives and liberty; the chiefs of the several bands also encouraged their followers, and endeavoured to infuse into their souls an ardent desire of signalizing their name, and resisting nobly all attempts to enslave them. These speeches, we generally find, were received with the greatest marks of approbation by the soldiers, which was signified by loud repeated shouts, and clatter of their arms.‡ There can be no doubt made, but that every one of these bands had their different ensign, or standard, to which they might repair, and without which great confusion must have happened in the time of battle. It does not appear that they had any instruments of martial music, to encourage the living, or drown the cries of the maimed; loud shouts, and repeated noises, made by themselves, appear to have been all the arts they made use of on such occasions.§

Stratagems of war.

As the art of war was so familiar to the Britons, we can scarcely doubt of their using various stratagems to deceive the enemy, and gain advantage to themselves. The artful conduct of Casibellanus, when pursued by Cæsar, in a great variety of particulars, the feigned flights of the Britons to draw the Romans into ambushes, the endeavouring to surround their armies in engagements, and a great variety of schemes put in practice by the British generals, not only redound to their lasting honour, but also prove their knowledge and address in the great requisites of military conduct.||

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xii. cap. 8. & Vita Agric.

† Ibid. ibid.

‡ Ibid. ibid. & Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10. Xiphil. ex Dion. in Neron. & vide pages 17, 24, & 31, of this volume.

§ The Gauls indeed, we are told by Diodorus Siculus, used a sort of war trumpet,

“ Barbaricis etiam pro suo more tubis utuntur quæ horridum & bellico terrori convenientium reddunt mugitum inflatæ.” Perhaps the Britons might do the same, though it is not noticed by the historian. Vide Diod. Sic. lib. v.

|| Cæsar, Bel. Gal. lib. iv. & v. Tacit. Annal. ut sup. & Vita Agric.

Fortifications

Fortifications they either never attended to, or else knew not how to make; for their strongest places were only furrounded by a ditch, and valum of earth; and the entrances blocked up with trees cut down, and laid across them;\* or instead of the valum, a rude wall of great loose stones, without mortar or cement;† indeed it was but seldom that they threw up entrenchments about their camps, their carts and waggons placed in a circle round them, was all the guard they cared for; nor is this much to be wondered at, when we consider the fiery and ungoverned tempers of the Britons, who were always too eager for the battle, to raise up works about them, which might protract the time, or be troublesome to perform.

The Romans when they had once gained ground in Britain, with their usual policy, introduced a love for luxury and idleness amongst the provincial natives; and by that means caused a universal decay of military discipline: after their departure, the unhappy Britons soon found by woeful experience, that the knowledge which they had gained, was but ill compensated for the loss of national courage, and the power of self defence.‡

## C H A P. VI.

*Agriculture and dependent Arts.*

IT is the first consideration of mankind, to procure food, without which they know they cannot long subsist. In the earlier ages, the spontaneous roots of the earth, and fruits of the trees, might be first eaten; soon after the flesh of animals, was found to be a more substantial nourishment; this naturally introduced hunting into the world; the knowledge of which was quickly attained by every nation, however barbarous. The Britons were well acquainted with hunting; and even so late as the beginning of the third century, it was the chief method by which all the inhabitants beyond the wall of Hadrian, supplied themselves with food: for though their coasts abounded with fish, yet they were ignorant of the art of taking them; not perhaps from their want of invention, but inclination; for they would not eat them when caught.§

In the south of Britain, where the natives were more civilized, hunting was only followed as an amusement, and not to supply their necessary wants; therefore we find the inhabitants of the sea-coasts,

\* Casl. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. xii. cap. 8.

‡ Gildas Hist.

§ Xiphil. ex Dio. in Sever.

opposite to Gaul, had in the days of Cæsar already made great advancements in the necessary arts to render life comfortable and pleasing :\* and the more inland natives, were but a step behind them; these latter subsisted entirely by pasturage; they never sowed any lands, but fed upon the milk, and flesh of their cattle, which was all the wealth they boasted:† but their southern neighbours, manured and cultivated their ground, and sowed corn, which being reaped in proper time, was laid up in the ears in subterraneous caves and granaries; from whence they took as much as was necessary for the day, and having dried the ears, they beat the grain from them, which they bruised, and made into a sort of bread for present use.‡

The Romans improve this art.

Upon the establishment of the Romans in Britain, agriculture was greatly improved, for the veteran soldiers who were planted in colonies, amongst the natives, were as expert in this art, as they were in the battle; from them, the Britons soon took example, and pursued the readiest methods to improve their lands; and by this means, more ground was cultivated, and the produce encreased; so that the provincials not only procured corn enough for their consumption at home, but a considerable overplus was constantly exported to the continent for the use of the Romans there, and that in prodigious quantities.§ The great manure of the Britons was marle, a fat clay or earth, which they held in high esteem.||

Gardening first taught by the Romans.

The Britons were ignorant of gardening until the arrival of the Romans,\*\* who planted orchards immediately upon their coming into the island; and they soon found that the soil was fit for most kind of trees and vegetables; at the first it was thought that vines and olives†† would not flourish here; but as those conquerors became better acquainted with the land, they found it was also very proper for the growth of vines; accordingly leave was obtained of Probus the emperor of Rome, to plant vineyards and make wine.‡‡ All the various branches

\* Diod. Siculus, lib. v. & Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

‡ Diod. Siculus, lib. v. Some vestiges of this antient way of dressing of corn was discovered not long ago in several of the islands of Scotland. "This method is called Graddan, from the Irish word Grad, which signifies *quick*. A woman sitting down, takes a handful of corn, holding it by the stalks in the left hand, and then sets fire to the ears, which are presently in a flame; she has a stick in her right hand, which she manages very dexterously, beating out the

"grain at the instant the husk is quite burnt, for if she mis of that she must use the kiln; but experience has taught them this art to perfection. The corn may be so dressed, winnowed, ground, and baked within an hour." Martin's Description of the western islands of Scotland, p. 204.

§ Amm. Marcel. lib. xviii. cap. 22. Zozimi Hist. lib. iii.

|| Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xvii. cap. 6.

\*\* Strabo. lib. iv.

†† Tacit. Vit. Agric.

‡‡ Script. Hist. August. page 942.

of agriculture were soon made known to the southern Britons; yet these improvements advanced but gradually into the north, for in the time of Severus, we are assured, that the *Mæatae* and *Caledonians*, who inhabited beyond the wall of Hadrian, lived in barren mountains, and that they had no walled towns or cultivated lands, but lived on the milk and flesh of their flocks and herds, or on the fruits of the trees, or else on what they got by plunder and hunting:\* but the emperor Severus by levelling a great part of the country, and by draining the marshes, made it more fit for cultivation: from this time perhaps they might by degrees have applied themselves to husbandry; and the Christians who fled from the persecution of Dioclesian, and took refuge amongst this people, without doubt instructed them in the arts of husbandry, as well as in the doctrine of Christianity.†

After the departure of the Romans, such a scene of misery and distress ensued in the southern parts of Britain, that little attention could be paid to the necessary affairs of the people; and husbandry amongst the rest was neglected; by which means cruel famines, added to the misfortunes of the Britons, operated almost as powerfully as the swords of their enemies in their destruction.

The Britons were not at a loss for carts and waggons to convey their corn from place to place, or to serve every necessary purpose of agriculture; these we find they had in use, long before the arrival of the Romans;‡ nor can we wonder at it, when we recollect the chariots of war (a far more perfect kind of wheeled carriages than these were required to be) were universally used in Britain, when Cæsar made his first invasion:§ besides common carts and waggons, if we may believe some authors, they had also other sorts of carriages, which were used by the principal people for pleasure, to convey them to and fro; these were of two sorts, the *Benna*, and the *Petoriturum*; which differed from each other, the first supposed to have only two wheels, and the latter four: the common waggon as above mentioned, is usually called *Carrus* or *Currus*, by the antient authors.||

\* Xiphil. ex Dio. Nicæo. in Sever.

† St. Jerome reproaches Celestius a Scotchman, "that his belly was swelled" or distended with Scot's pottage or hasty "puddy." St. Hieron. Comment. in Jeremiah. Which is a proof at least, that in the beginning of the fifth century the Scots or Western Calidonians lived partly

upon this meal, to which they had been absolute strangers two hundred years before when invaded by Severus. Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. i. p. 317.

‡ Diod. Siculus, lib. v.

§ Vide page 259 of this volume.

|| Aylett. Sammes. Antiq. Anc. Brit. p. 120 and 121.

The departure of the Romans occasions the ruin of agriculture.

Wheel carriages of the Britons.

## C H A P. VII.

*Commerce and Navigation of the Britons.*

The Phœnicians  
the first traders  
with the Britons.

THE first people who visited Britain on account of trade were the Phœnicians; their coming was very early, though the exact time is not known; for a long time they kept the situation of the island secret, lest the Greeks should pursue the same rout, and share their trade:\* the most considerable commodities that the Phœnicians exported from the Scilly islands and bordering continent of Britain, were tin, lead and skins of beasts,† amongst which last no doubt the British wool may be included. In return for these articles, it does not appear that the merchants ever paid the Britons in gold or silver coin; the principle things which they imported were salt, earthen-ware, and trinkets made of brass;‡ as bracelets for the arms, chains for the neck, rings and the like, all of which the Britons greatly affected.

The Greeks  
discover Britain.

Notwithstanding all the precautions used by the Phœnicians, to keep the situation of Britain from the knowledge of the Greeks, that people at length discovered it; and as early (it is thought) as three hundred years before the Christian æra.§ The arrival of the Greeks greatly extended the trade of the Britons, and by the frequent intercourse with the merchants, all the inhabitants of Britain on the sea-coasts, opposite to Gaul, became more civilized; though it does not appear that either the Phœnicians or the Greeks, attempted to plant any colonies upon the island. As the Greeks encreased their trade, they shortened their sea voyages; and the tin which was got upon the continent of Britain, after being refined, and melted down into small ingots, was by the native Britons conveyed in carts and waggons, at low water, over into the Isle of Wight; and there sold to the Greek merchants, who exported it from thence to the continent of Gaul, and so it was carried by land on horses, to the mouth of the Rhone, from whence it was sent to all parts of the world, where those merchants traded.||

Taxes imposed  
on the British  
merchandise.

This seems to have been the state of commerce in Britain, when Julius Cæsar invaded the island: he imposed a tribute upon the natives on his departure, and though it was never paid by them, yet it afforded a handle to the succeeding emperors, to make demands upon them. Augustus drew great profits from the Britons, without any expence or

\* Herodotus makes mention of the Cæterides or Scilly islands, from whence the Phœnicians fetched their tin, but declares he could not discover their situation.

† Strabo, lib. iii. sub fine.

‡ Ibid.

§ Vide Sammes Brit. chap. vi. & Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. I.

|| Diod. Siculus, lib. v.

trouble;



trouble; partly by presents, which were made him by such of the British princes as courted his favour; and partly by taxes laid upon goods, imported from the continent to Britain, or exported from Britain to the continent; and as those duties were in general very reasonable, the British merchants did not complain, but carried on their trade quietly under the protection of the Romans.\*

After the Romans became acquainted with the Britons, besides the usual Merchandize of the Britons. of tin, lead, and skins, other valuable things were found, which extended the commerce of the latter, and the revenues of the former; these were gold, silver, iron, corn, cattle, slaves, and dogs for hunting; † with various precious stones, and pearls: ‡ chalk, lime and marle, are also to be reckoned amongst the British exports at this period: § amongst these we must not omit baskets made of wicker, || which were manufactured in Britain, with such niceness, that they bore a great price, and were used at Rome: amidst a great variety of goods which the Romans imported in lieu of these articles we find the following trinkets enumerated: ivory bridles, gold chains, cups of amber, and drinking glasses; \*\* these are some few, and perhaps the most valuable commodities, for these could only be intended for the kings, and chief nobles amongst the Britons; the more common sort of people were doubtless contented with things of less worth: but we may reasonably conclude, that as the natives grew more refined by their intercourse with the Romans, a vast multitude of other things, of still more consequence, were required, and these baubles ceased to constitute any considerable part of the foreign imports.

\* Strabo. lib. iv.

† Ibid.

‡ Concerning the pearls of Britain, Tacitus says, they "are of a dark and "livid hue," Vit. Agric. and Pliny to the same purpose: "In Britain some pearls do "grow, but they are small and dim, not "clear and bright:" he after adds, "Julius Cæsar did not deny that the breast-plate which he dedicated to Venus Mother, within her temple, was made of "British pearls." Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ix. cap. 35.

§ The following remarkable inscription, which was found with many others near Zeland A. D. 1647, makes it appear that chalk was exported from Britain to the continent in very antient times; and that this trade was carried on by a class of men who were called British chalk merchants:

\*\* Strabo. lib. iv.

DEAE NEHALENNIAE  
OB MERCEM RECTE CONSER  
VATAS SECUND: SILVANVS  
NEGO + TOR CRETARIVS  
BRITANNICIANVS

V. S. L. M

To the goddess Nehalennia,  
For his goods well preserved,  
Secundus Silvanus,  
A chalk merchant  
Of Britain,

Willingly performed his merited vow.

This proves at least, that the chalk trade was carried on before Christianity was established in Britain. Vid. Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. i.

|| Of these Martial speaks, lib. xiv. c. 49. 99

Barbara depilis veni basanda Britannis,  
Sed me jam mavnult dicere Roma suam.

A basket I, by painted Britons wrought,  
And now to Rome's imperial city brought.

Trading towns  
in Britain.

The chief trading towns, during the government of the Romans, are thought to have been Clausentum or Old Southampton, and Rutupæ or Richborough;\* besides there is little doubt, but that London was a place of great consequence as a commercial town; for as early as the year 60, we find it famous for its wealth and the resort of merchants, though it was not then distinguished by the title of a colony.†

The shipping of  
the Britons.

Whilst the trade with Britain was carried on by the Phœnicians and the Greeks, the Britons had no need of ships; whatever they wanted was supplied by the merchants, in exchange for the commodities which abounded in the island; but after, as they traded to the continent of Gaul, it is highly probable they were furnished with vessels, to carry their goods over thither, and bring back what they obtained in exchange. The accounts which are left us concerning their vessels, only make mention of small boats, which were either made of wicker, and covered over with hides of oxen;‡ or in the more perfect state, the keels and ribs were constructed of a strong light frame of timber, which like the former, was covered with leather; and in these boats, the inhabitants of Ireland and Calidonia, in the summer, would pass the sea which flows between Britain and Ireland,§ and is often very rough and boisterous. In the southern parts of Britain also, the same sort of boats were made use of, chiefly perhaps to pass rivers and deep waters, which were not fordable, and to transport their merchandize from place to place.

Reasons why  
the Britons are  
supposed to have  
large ships.

Yet it is highly probable, that besides these little boats, the Britons had larger vessels, built of more solid materials; and we have great reason to believe this, when we find ships of a much compleater construction made use of by the Gauls, and in those very parts that traded with the Britons. Besides, when the Veneti, inhabitants of the promontory of Gaul, now called Brittany, were preparing to attack the forces of Cæsar by sea, they sent into Britain for assistance, which was granted them:¶ and we may easily conceive, that small wicker boats could have been of no use against ships and galleys built on the Roman construction: there is little doubt to be made, but that those of the Britons were nearly, if not exactly the same, with those of the Veneti; which were built with their keels flatter than the Roman vessels, that they might lie more conveniently in the shallows; their prows were very erect, and their sterns also adapted to the violence of the waves in a storm: these ships were entirely constructed of oak, so that they were not easily broken, or hurt, by the sharp irons in the prows of the Roman galleys: the seats for the rowers were made of beams a

\* Musgrave, Bel. Brit. et Battely Antiq. Rutup.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 49.

‡ Lucan. lib. i. & Plin. Nat. Hist. l. iv. c. 16.

§ Solinus, lib. iii.

¶ Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. iii. cap. 9.

foot broad, and fastened with iron pins an inch thick: the anchors were fastened with iron chains, instead of cables; and the sails were made of hides, or tanned leather cut thin: \* such substantial vessels as these might be serviceable to the Gauls, in the engagement with the Romans, which soon after followed; this sea-fight was decided on the coast of Arimorica, now Brittany; the united forces of the Gauls and Britons, consisted of two hundred and twenty large ships, which were almost all of them destroyed in the conflict. This unhappy adventure entirely ruined the naval force of the Gauls and Britons, which is the reason by some assigned, why the Britons did not oppose Cæsar by sea, when he invaded them the year following. †

The Britons do not appear to have ever undertaken any long voyages, either in their little boats, or their larger vessels; we read indeed, that in the former, they used frequently to go to an island six days sail distant from Britain; ‡ but there is reason to believe, that in the latter, they never proceeded further to the south, than the mouth of the river Garonne in Gaul. §

The Romans improved the British shipping; the emperor Claudius, bestowed several privileges by law, on those who built ships for trade, || so that their number was presently increased: about the year 359, we find no less than eight hundred ships, employed in the exportation of corn from Britain to Gaul. Besides the merchant vessels, the Romans also had a fleet of ships of war, to secure the coast, and protect the trade; this fleet was commanded by an officer of great rank and distinction; his title was high admiral of the British seas: \*\* this important office, was filled by Sejus Saturnius, in the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius: also, we may recollect, how very formidable the fleet was under Carausius and Alecctus, the two usurping tyrants, who assumed the purple in Britain, the former about the year 286, the latter A. D. 293. ††

Soon after the death of Alecctus, the Saxon pirates, who had before infested the sea-coasts, began again their usual ravages; plundering the inhabitants near the sea-shore, and seizing upon the merchant ships, which were proceeding on their voyages; these insults obliged the Ro-

\* Cæsar. *Bel. Gal. lib. iii. cap. 13.*

† Selden's *Mare Clausum. lib. ii. cap. 2, &c.*

‡ Pliny ex Timæus. See *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 16.* When one considers this passage, one knows not what to make of the account given by Solinus, "That the British sailors when they began a voyage, always abstained from food until it was completed."

§ Strabo, *lib. iv.*

|| Sueton. in *Claud. cap. 18 & 19.* But these privileges were confined to those who built ships capable of carrying ten thousand Roman modia, or about three hundred and twelve quarters of English corn. By this we may form some idea of their size at this period. Vide *Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. I.*

\*\* *Archigubernus Classis Britannicæ.*

†† Vide page 41 and 42 of this vol.

mans to keep a strong fleet upon the British seas ; and to render themselves more secure, they erected several forts upon the coasts, where the pirates usually landed ; and these were put under the command of an officer of considerable rank, called the Count of the Saxon shore in Britain.\*

The Romans  
take their ship-  
ping with them.

When the Romans took their leave of Britain, they made use of their fleet to transport them into Gaul ; so that the hapless Britons were left open and defenceless on all sides, their inland territories were oppressed with the continual outrages of the Scots and Picts, and their sea-coasts were plundered by the barbarous sea-rovers and pirates.

## C H A P. VIII.

### *Working of Metals and Coinage of the Britons.*

The Britons  
anciently under-  
stood the work-  
ing of metals.

**T**HAT the Britons understood the art of working of metals in ancient times, may be proved from a great number of sharp instruments which they had, as axes, spear and arrow heads, swords, and the like, made of various metals. Tin, in all probability, was the first metal which they understood the nature of, and this they used to dig up and refine, long before they were discovered by the Romans ; especially those who dwelt towards the land's end, who by frequent intercourse with foreign nations, were much more civilized : these dug the tin ore out of their mines, and refined it with great dexterity and art ; after which they melted it, and cast it into small blocks or ingots, of a square form like dice, which they conveyed in carts and

\* Comes littoris Saxonici per Britanniam---and, the nine forts under his command were, 1 Branodunum, *Brancafer* ; 2 Garionnonum, *Bury Castle*, near Yarmouth, both on the Norfolk coast ; 3 Othona, *Itbancafer*, near Maldon in Essex, now over flowed by the sea, though at low water some of the foundation is yet to be discovered ; 4 Regulbium, *Reculver* ; 5 Rutupæ, *Ricborough* ; 6 Dubris, *Dover* ; 7 Lemanae, *Lime* ; all these last four are on the coast of Kent ; 8 Anderida, *Hastings*, or *Eastbourne*, in Sussex ; 9 Portus Adurnus, *Portsmouth*, in Hampshire. Horfl. Brit. Rom. p. 471. These nine forts were

garrisoned by two thousand two hundred foot, and two hundred horse. Ibid. The ensigns of the count of the Saxon shore in Britain, were a small book of instructions, and the figures of nine castles, representing the nine forts under his command : his court was composed of the following officers ; the principal officer from the court of the master of the foot, two auditors from the same court, and a master of the prisons also from the same court, a secretary, an assistant, an under assistant, a register, clerks of appeal, serjeants, and other under officers. Notitia Imperii, cap. 52.

waggons

waggons to the Isle of Wight, where it was sold to the merchants, who came thither on purpose to traffic with the natives.\*

Lead also they dug out of their mines, and refined; this metal was one of the chief commodities which the Phœnicians and Greeks, exported from Britain;† and we cannot doubt their being very early acquainted with the use of it, because the ore is said to have been found very near the surface of the earth, and in such prodigious abundance, that the natives were by a law forbid to take up more than a fixed quantity annually for exportation.‡

Copper and brass were imported into Britain by the Phœnicians, who exchanged those metals for tin and lead:§ yet when the emperor Severus invaded the northern parts of Britain, the Mæatae and the Calidonians seem to have had some knowledge of working the last of these metals, by the round balls of brass which were fastened at the end of their spears. Probably they received them from their neighbours in the south, for which, perhaps, they paid cattle, or some such consideration.||

The Britons had iron, but it was so very scarce, that their money was made of it, and trinkets to adorn their persons: the general usage of this excellent metal was first introduced by the Romans, who erected foundaries, and set up forges, in several parts of the kingdom for the manufacturing of arms, tools, and utensils of every kind. Gold and silver were not known to be in the island at the time of Cæsar's arrival;¶ but a short time after, both these metals were discovered;†† the art of refining and working them, the Britons might learn from their neighbours, the Gauls, who understood both extremely well.

The earthen vessels, which constituted a part of the merchandize that the Phœnicians brought into Britain,‡‡ may plainly prove that the natives themselves were not expert in the manufacturing of them; though, without doubt, they could not be ignorant of some method of forming vessels of clay, and to dry them in the sun, in order to hold liquids: this we may conclude from the early want which every people must find of such necessary utensils, and which were so easy to be made. However this may be, when the Romans came into the island they had no longer any need to have them imported from abroad; those ingenious people made all sorts of earthen ware in the greatest perfection, and without doubt instructed the Britons in their art.

When Cæsar invaded Britain the natives were ignorant of the use of coin: their treasures consisted of rings and tallies of iron, which they gave in exchange for such merchandize as they wanted.§§ Coined money

\* Diod. Sic. lib. v.

† Strabo, lib. iii. sub fine.

‡ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiv. cap. 17.

§ Strabo, ut sup.

|| Xiphil. ex Dion. Nic. in Severus.

\*\* Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

†† Tacit. Vita Agricola.

‡‡ Strabo, lib. iii. sub fine.

§§ "Uruntur, aut ære, aut annulis  
"ferreis ad certum pondus examinatis  
"pro nummo." Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. v.  
cap. 9.

ney, it is thought, was first introduced into Britain by the Gaulish merchants soon after the departure of Julius Cæsar; and from them also the Britons learnt the art of coinage.\*

When money was first coined in Britain, and by whom.

How early coined pieces were made use of in Britain has long been a matter of great dispute amongst the learned; but those opinions seem most likely to be true, which fix the æra of coinage in the reign of Augustus, and make Cunobelinus the first British prince who struck money in Britain;† and he must have coined to a considerable amount, for no less than forty coins of gold, silver, and copper, of this prince, have been discovered, all of them of different dies and stamps, so that he must have made at least forty different coinages;‡ and as there is great reason to conclude that other kings of the Britons followed the example of this prince, a prodigious quantity of money must soon have been produced.

The Romans forbid the currency of British money.

After the Roman conquest there was no more British money coined; for those conquerors not only forbid the making of a new coinage, but put a stop to the circulation of what was already struck, and inflicted severe penalties on any who gave or received such coin in barter for merchandize, so that the Roman money was soon made current amongst the provincial Britons; and as the Romans increased the commerce of the inhabitants, there is no doubt but by that means they added to their wealth, so that a vast quantity of real specie must have been circulated in the southern parts of Britain whilst the Roman government was in a flourishing condition.

The decline of the wealth of the Britons.

The wealth of the Britons declined about fifty years before the final retreat of the Romans from Britain, owing, in great measure, to the destructive ravages of the Picts and Scots in the northern parts of the provinces, and of the Franks and Saxons in the south upon the sea-coasts, who barbarously destroyed every place wherever they came. Besides this, the two unfortunate expeditions of Maximus and Constantine, (the first happening A. D. 381, and the last A. D. 408) gave a fatal blow to the declining wealth of the provincials; for these two adventurers collected and carried off all the money that they could get, in order to support their cause, and pay their army.§

\* Pegge's Essay on the Coins of Cunobelinus.

† Ibid.

‡ Mr. Pegge very properly arranges the coins of this prince in the following classes:

1. Those with the king's head and name, or some abbreviation of it.

2. Those with the king's name, and place of coinage.

3. Those with the king's name, and the word Tascia.

4. Those with the king's name, the word Tascia, and the place of coinage.

5. Those with the word Tascia only.

6. Those with the word Tascia, and the place of coinage. See specimens of all these classes, plate IV.

The word Tascia has been variously accounted for; but Mr. Pegge suspects, that it may have been the name of the mint-master of Cunobelinus. See Pegge's Essay on the Coins of Cunobelinus.

§ Vide pages 49, 50, & 52, of this vol.

Shortly

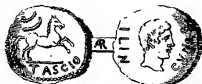
## CLASS I.



## II



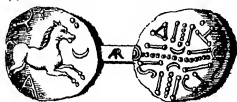
## III



## IV



## V



## VI.



Shortly after this, the Romans left the Britons to themselves, and their troubles fell so successively upon them, that they had no leisure to make fresh coinages, or even to make use of what little money they had left.

*The miseries of the Britons.*

In the early times, the want of solid roads and bridges must have been a great hindrance to the Britons in conveying their goods from one place to another: all these inconveniencies were also remedied by the Romans, who made four great roads through the southern parts of Britain, and bridges over rivers, so that all sorts of merchandize might be carried from one part of the island to the other with the greatest ease and expedition. These improvements were soon broke in upon by the calamities which followed upon their departure.

*The Romans make roads and bridges in Britain.*

## C H A P. IX.

*The Cloathing Arts, and Habits of the Britons.*

WHEN men had provided themselves with food, and were in the possession of habitations to protect them from the inclemency of the weather, their next thoughts were in general employed in furnishing themselves with cloaths for the covering of their nakedness. After they had slain the beasts of the field for their food, the appropriating their skins for garments seems to be a circumstance so natural, and likely to follow, we may easily conclude that such were the habits of men in the very ancient ages; and that such was the habit of the inland Britons, when Cæsar invaded their island, we have sufficient testimony to prove.\*

*Clothing, an early consideration.*

We have also the greatest reason to believe, that the inhabitants of South Britain were acquainted with the arts of dressing, spinning, and weaving both flax and wool before the arrival of the Romans, because their neighbours, the Gauls, had long understood them; and, as a proof, we may add, that the inhabitants of the Cassiterides, or Scilly islands, were then clothed, and their personal appearance was as follows:—A long black tunic reaching down to their ancles, and bound round the waist with a girdle; they wore their beards long, and hanging on each side of their mouths like wings.† Besides, we are assured that the inhabitants of Kent, and the sea-coasts, were by far more civilized than the inland Britons;‡ therefore, it almost amounts to a proof of their having garments, though they are not particularly described.

*Reasons for thinking the Britons were acquainted with the arts of clothing.*

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

figure from the left hand side of the plate.

† Strabo, lib. iii. See this figure delineated, plate V. of this volume, the second

‡ Cæfar, ut sup.



Various cloths  
made by the  
Gauls.

The Gauls made several sorts of cloth; the first and most valuable was manufactured of fine wool of different tints, which being spun into yarn, was woven chequer-wise, so as it might fall into small squares of various colours.\* Another garment they made of coarser wool, which was very thickly woven; this cloth was used by the Romans themselves in cold weather:† also a very thick kind of cloth they used to make, of wool driven tightly together, without spinning or weaving, which, if worked up with vinegar, was so hard and impenetrable, that it was esteemed a good guard against the edge or point of a sword; and what was sheared off, and came from it, (when taken out of the coppers and leads where it was dressed) made excellent flocks, which were used in stuffing mattresses.‡ Thus much for their woollen manufactory. They were equally famous for their linen, which they wove with great dexterity, as also cloths to make sails for ships; these were sold to various nations, and constituted a great part of their trade.§

Ancient method  
of bleaching  
linen.

When they had completed their linen in the loom, they proceeded to use several arts to make it more soft and beautiful, and to bleach it; the whole process, as well as the whiting the flax before it went to the loom, was as follows:—The unspun yarn was put into a great mortar, where it was pounded and beaten in water; when it was come to a certain whiteness, it was sent to the weaver; and when it was received again from him made into cloth, it was laid upon a large smooth stone, and well beaten with broad-headed cudgels: the more frequently it was beaten, and the more labour was bestowed, the softer and whiter the cloth always proved; but very frequently they would mingle the juice of poppies with the water which they used on these occasions, and that was thought to contribute considerably to the making the linen more white and beautiful.|| Sometimes they used soap to scour their cloths, which they made of the fat of animals, and the ashes of certain vegetables; nay, even the invention of this valuable article is attributed to them.\*\*

The art of  
dying.

Now we are speaking of their linen and woollen manufactories, we must not forget their skill in the art of dying their cloth of various colours, which they performed in a very skilful manner; for they found means to counterfeit the purple of Tyrus, the scarlet, and the violet in grain. In short, they were able to make all sorts of colours that can be thought of, and that with the juice of herbs only.††

First garments of  
the Britons.

When the Britons became a little more civilized, and began to wear garments, the mantle, or plaid, was the first they adopted, which was so made as to cover all the trunk of the body, before and behind, and

\* Diod. Sic. lib. v. Pliny's Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 48.

† Strabo, lib. iv.

‡ Pliny's Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 48.

§ Ibid. lib. xx. cap. 1.

|| Ibid. lib. xix. cap. 1.

\*\* Ibid. lib. xxviii. cap. 12.

†† Ibid. lib. xxii. cap. 2. From the same same author we may gather several of the herbs used for the commoner colours, as woad for blue, the hyacinth for light reds, and the like.



was fastened upon the breast with a clasp; or, for want of that, with a thorn.\* These mantles are thought to have been all of one colour, and smooth on the inside, with long hair on the outside, like the common rugs which are laid on the beds by way of coverlets;† and in early times these rude garments were esteemed a luxury, and worn by none but the kings and nobles; but as the habits were improved, persons of that high rank provided themselves with a better sort, and the rug descended to the common people.

The habit of a Belgic Gaul, which was also adopted by the southern Britons, from unquestionable authority, was as follows:—A tunic, ornamented with various flowers; close garments, called braccæ, which covered their legs and thighs; over their tunic they wore a cassock, or cloak of chequer-work, joined together with laces on the inside, so as to form the appearance of flowers; this last garment was made thicker and more massy for winter, and thinner for the summer. Some wore belts over their tunics, adorned with gold or silver, from which hung their swords, suspended by chains of brass or iron; on their heads they wore helmets of brass, ornamented with horns of the same metal; about their necks, and about their wrists they wore chains and bracelets of gold,‡ as also large golden rings upon their fingers.§ This was the dress of a warrior, and most likely of a chief nobleman.|| Others again we find without the tunic, and wearing a woollen robe with sleeves, which reached down to their hips.\*\*

Next to these we may justly place the ancient inhabitants of the Cassiterides, who wore long black garments, as was before observed, and walked about from place to place with staves in their hands.†† And after these again should be added the inland inhabitants of Britain, who were clothed in skins:‡‡ and these were the habits of all the natives who possessed the southern division of Britain at the time of Cæsar's arrival.

The Maxæatæ and Calidonians were not at this time discovered to the Romans; and even when they were by Julius Agricola,§§ all that we can learn concerning them, is, that they were in a state of barbarity; and this we may be well assured of, for when we meet with a more particular account of them, so late as the reign of the emperor Severus, we find them still naked, wearing about their necks and bellies large rings, and chains of iron, which they looked upon as great ornaments, and prized them as highly as other nations do silver or gold. Yet it should seem that this nakedness did not proceed from the absolute want of garments, but from pride; for they painted their bodies with various co-

\* Pelloutier Hist. Celt. lib. i. p. 301.

† Strabo, lib. iv.

‡ Diodorus Siculus, lib. v.

§ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiii. cap. 1.

|| See plate V. of this volume.

\*\* Strabo, lib. iv.

†† Ibid. lib. iii. See plate V.

‡‡ Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. See plate V. of this volume.

§§ Tacit. Vita Agricola.

The habit of a Belgic Gaul.

Habits of the Britons.

The barbarity of the northern nations.

lours, and made thereon the representation of animals, and they were fearful if they were clothed all these delightful ornaments would be hid;\* they either knew not the use of shoes, or did not care to wear them.†

The dress of the  
druids, and of  
the women.

The habits of the druids differed from those of the laity, and, if not always, upon their solemn festivals and sacrifices were white, and very probably of linen for distinction's sake.‡ How the women were habited at this early period we are not so well informed; only we find, that they let their hair hang loose upon their shoulders, and being turned back before, fell down behind, without tying or braiding; a constant attention was paid to make it of a yellow hue by art, if it was not so naturally; and even where it was, it was thought more beautiful if the tint could be heightened.§ The women also wore massy chains of gold about their necks, great bracelets upon their arms, and rings upon their fingers.||

The habit of  
Boudicea de-  
scribed.

The habit of Boudicea, the famous British heroine, is very luckily preserved, as well as a perfect description of her person: She was a large well-made woman, of a severe presence, and her voice was loud and shrill; her hair, which was of a deep yellow, and very long, hung down to the bottom of her back, and on her neck she wore a massy chain of gold; she was habited in a tunic, wrought and interwoven with various colours, over which was a looser robe of coarser make; and bound round her with a girdle, fastened with buckles. This was her usual habit; but as she was now upon the point of giving battle to the Romans, she bore a spear also in her hand.\*\*

Head coverings,  
and shoes.

What covering the Britons or Gauls had for their heads when they did not wear their helmets or accoutrements of war cannot be discovered, but perhaps none at all; for whenever their dress is described we meet not with any mention made of them: or, if they had any, it is likely they were only caps made of the skins of beasts, with the hair turned outwards. In like manner might their shoes be made of skins, with the hairy side outermost, and bound round the instep with a cord or thong. We may be well assured that the more civilized Britons had some sort of shoes,

\* Herodian. in Vita Severus, lib. iii. cap. 46. & Xiphil. ex Dio. Nic. in Sever. Isidorus writes us, that the name of the Picts, (which was given latterly to the Maeatae) corresponded well with the appearance of their bodies: for (adds he) they squeeze the juice of certain herbs into figures made on their bodies with the points of needles, and so carry the badge of their nobility upon their spotted skins. Isidorus Orig. lib. xix. cap. 23. So also Solinus says, as this operation was done with sharp needles, and was very painful to them, those were esteemed the bravest who bore it with the greatest fortitude, and received the deepest punctures to imbibe the

greatest quantities of paint. Solin. lib. xxxv. sub finem.

† The reason why they wore no shoes, might be because they thought they would prevent their running so swift; so also, they would wear no armour because it was cumbersome to them when they passed the bogs and fens. Herodian, ut sup. See one of these Britons represented plate V. of this volume.

‡ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. cap. 44.

§ Diod. Sic. lib. v.

|| Ibid. & Pliny's Nat. Hist. l. xxxiii. c. 1.

\*\* Xiphil. ex Dion. in Nerone. See this figure delineated, plate V.

for a particular stress is laid upon the barbarity of the Maœatæ and Cadonians from their being unshod.\*

We will now take a short review of the habits which we suppose to have been worn by the civiler Britons, and which we have seen by undoubted authority was the attire of the ancient Gauls. The first is the robe, or cloak; whether it be made of the basket, or chequer-work, or whether made of woollen cut smooth on the inside, and the hair left long on the outside like a rug, both these sorts were worn by the Gauls, and one of them had sleeves.† The second part of their dress was the tunic.‡ The third part, and the most remarkable, the bracæ,§ which were a sort of garments not unlike the trowsers of our sailors in the present day, saving only that they came down to the ancles, and were there tied round close to the shoe. These habits, which were certainly worn by all the Celtic nations, may be seen frequent enough in many figures on the Trajan and Antonine columns; and the authorities quoted below may perhaps amount to a proof, that these were also the habits of the Britons who dwelt upon the sea-coasts opposite to Gaul.

The personal ornaments which the Gauls affected most, were large chains of gold; these they wore round their necks; massy bracelets for their arms, and rings for the fingers, of the same metal; all which were universally used by both sexes. And we are well assured that the South Britons adorned themselves in the same manner;|| nay, so generally was this taste diffused throughout the island, (which proves it of long standing) that in the north, where gold was not to be procured, the natives made chains, rings, and bracelets, of iron; of which, also, they were not a little proud.\*\*

It was some time after the Romans had established themselves in Britain before the natives were prevailed upon to quit their ancient habits. Julius Agricola, who, in all his proceedings, discovered his prudence as a commander and as a governor, by lenitive measures led them by degrees from one step of luxury to another; and it is under his administration that we first find them wearing the Roman apparel, which before they had shewn great dislike to. As they now began to learn the Roman language, to build temples, places of assembly, and imitating the cu-

\* Xiphil. ex Dio. Nic. in Sever.

† Varro informs us, that the Britons used to wear a garment called a *Gannacum*, which was of divers colours woven together, making a gaudy shew. This garment answers well to the description of the above robe, or cloak, as given before, page 258 of this volume.

‡ The tunic, Strabo expressly declares, was worn by the inhabitants of the Cassiterides, before described; the tunic of various colours makes a part of the habit of Boudicea, as before declared.

§ That the Britons also wore the bracæ, let Martial bear witness, "Quam veteres brachæ Britonis pauperis, &c."

|| This may be proved from the great variety of rings, and chains of gold, which were carried before Caractacus in triumph, when he was led before the emperor Claudius: these he had taken in his wars from the monarchs of kingdoms neighbouring to his own.

\*\* See the authority quoted before.

The habits of the Britons particularized.

Ornaments worn by the Britons.

The change made in dress by the Romans.

stoms of their conquerors in all their proceedings,\* the habits above-described were no longer used, but the gown of the Romans, and other garments more convenient, or perhaps, at least, more agreeable.

The Romans improve the clothing art.

The Romans, soon after they had brought the natives to conform to their customs and habits, improved the art of making cloth, and there was an imperial manufactory established at Venta Belgarum, now Winchester, where all sorts of woollen and linen cloth was made for the use of the Roman army in Britain.† As the Romans improved this art, so also at their departure it declined; for the miseries which followed in Britain prevented a proper attention being paid to it.

## C H A P. X.

### *Learning, and the State of the polite Arts amongst the ancient Britons.*

The druids the only people of learning amongst the Britons.

THE druids were the only persons of learning in Britain before, and even some time after, the arrival of the Romans; and to these men the natives paid the highest honours, for they were both priests and philosophers. It was customary with the Britons never to perform any sacred rite without their assistance, for they believed them to be well acquainted with the will of the gods; and for that reason were the most proper persons to offer up their prayers and thanksgivings.‡ These priests, as we have seen before, were divided into three classes, the bards, the vates, and the druids;§ the first were poets and musicians; the second were priests and physiologists; and the last added to the study of physiology, that of moral philosophy.||

The druids improved the Britons.

These priests polished, and brought their scholars into a more rational way of living, and taught them some branches of useful learning. The vates, by their researches into the order of things, endeavoured to lay open the hidden secrets of nature; whilst the druids were men of a more sublime and penetrating spirit, and acquired the highest renown by their speculations, which were at once both subtle and lofty.\*\*

The physiology of the druids.

It is true, at this distance of time, there is no possibility of giving a clear and distinct account of the learning of the druids; all that we can gather, must be from the slight hints which are to be met with in the ancient authors, and which can only lead us to some few particulars. One of their physiological opinions concerning the universe, was, that it

\* Tacit. Vita Agricol.

† Camd. Brit. in Hampshire.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. v. cap. 31.

§ Vide page 191 of this volume.

|| Ammian. Marcel.

\*\* Ibid.

should

should never be entirely destroyed, or annihilated, but that it should suffer a succession of violent changes and revolutions, which would be produced, sometimes by the predominating power of fire, and sometimes by that of water.\* All the rest of their various enquiries into the origin, nature, laws, and properties, of material objects, are unhappily lost; and this misfortune, most likely, we chiefly owe to their refusing to commit their opinions to writing.

The druids (who were employed in matters of the highest speculation) we find instructing their scholars concerning the heavenly bodies and their motions, and treating of the power and might of the gods.† There is little doubt to be made, but that the druids also pretended to a knowledge of astrology; because, of all superstitions, this seems the most likely to lay fast hold upon the minds of men; and when most of the rest were abolished as absurd, this held its consequence, and was not utterly rejected till very latter days: however this may be, it is certain that they were astronomers, though we know but little of their opinions upon this subject; nor can we in the least pretend to investigate their ideas of the mundane system. Their time they computed by nights;‡ they had also the division of months and years;§ both which they are said to have begun from the full of the moon: but if they reckoned only twelve moons in their year, their computation must have fallen considerably short of the solar year; and would have soon called for an alteration; yet by what means they rectified the deficiency is not known. It is certain that they paid great regard to the age of the moon whenever they proceeded on any business of importance; and the time that there was a new moon, or that she was at the full, was always esteemed the most auspicious.||

From a great variety of circumstances we may be led to conclude, that the druids were skilled in the art of arithmetic, which must have been absolutely necessary in all their computations, as well as in their public and private accounts. Their knowledge of the Greek alphabet is thought to have been two ways serviceable to them; first, as letters; and secondly, as figures. With respect to geometry; to what extent their knowledge of this science was carried, we can by no means determine; yet it seems they were acquainted with it, because they determined the bounds and limits of all estates which were disputed; and we find them engaged in the more sublime speculations of geometry, as measuring the magnitude of the earth, nay, of the world itself. Geography again it seems reasonable that they should have some skill in, because when annual disputes were referred to the arch-druid, and the provincial druids delivered in their determinations upon such matters as might relate to estates and landed possessions, this must be settled by the ascertaining in some measure the extent of such possessions.\*\*

\* Strabo, lib. iv.  
† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi. & Pomp. Mela, lib. iii. cap. 2.  
‡ Cæf. ut sup.

§ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. cap. 41.  
|| Ibid.  
\*\* Vide Borlafs's History of Cornwall, and Stukeley's Stone Henge.

Mechanical  
knowledge of  
the druids.

The Druids were certainly well versed in mechanical knowledge; this may be easily proved, when we recollect that Stone Henge, and a great variety of other ponderous structures, are the lasting remains of their skill; for it must require no mean dexterity, to convey such immense stones from place to place, and to raise them to such heights as we now find them.\*

The knowledge  
that the druids  
had of physic.

The druids also were the only physicians amongst the Gauls and Britons; † which people were the more particularly inclined to make application to them for relief, because they thought that all internal diseases proceeded from the anger of the gods, and therefore none could be so proper to make intercession for them, as the priest of those very deities from whom their afflictions came; for this cause also they offered sacrifices, when sick; and if dangerously ill, the better to prevail upon the gods to restore them to health, a man was slain, and sacrificed upon their altars; and this belief also gave the supposed power to charms and incantations, so frequently practised in those times of superstition, to drive away evil spirits, and to heal diseases.‡

The anatomy  
and surgery of  
the druids.

What knowledge they had in the anatomy of the human body cannot be ascertained, yet is it highly probable that they had some general ideas of the muscles, nerves, great blood vessels, and other external parts of the body; and also of the chief intestines; and this they might have learned from a long course of human sacrifices. Modern authors indeed, have enlarged greatly upon this subject, and attributed to them, a much more extensive knowledge of anatomy; but as what they have advanced is merely conjectural, we have neither space nor leisure to insert their various opinions.§ The druidical practice of surgery, without doubt, extended to the healing of wounds, setting of broken bones, the reducing of dislocations, and such obvious branches of the art. Yet all this was not done in a plain ready way; but the simplicity of their practice was concealed, and numberless charms, spells, and incantations made use of, to deceive the patient, and encrease their own consequence.

Botany of the  
druids.

Since the chief of their medicines were composed of the juice and decoctions of various herbs, we may be well assured, that botany was not the least of their studies. The mistletoe, and the ceremonies used in cutting it from the tree whereon it was found growing, as also the manner of gathering|| the herb Samulos, as well as their medicinal vir-

\* Vide Borlafs's Hist. Cornwall & Stukeley's Stone Henge.

† Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxx. cap. 1.

‡ There is no person that makes any doubt, says Pliny, but that magic derived its origin from medicine, and that by its flattering and delusive powers, it came to

be esteemed the most sublime and sacred part of the art of healing. Pliny's Nat. Hist. ut sup.

§ See Stukeley's Stone Henge, Borlafs's Ant. of Cornwall, Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. &c.

|| Vide page 196 of this volume.



tues, have been before declared.\* To these we may add, the Selago, a kind of hedge hyssop, which was greatly admired by the druids; the person who gathered it was to be clothed in a white garment, and to offer a sacrifice of bread and wine before he proceeded to take it; when he had done this, he was to cover his right hand with the skirt of his robe, and with a hook, made of more precious metal than iron, cut up the herb, which he was carefully to place in a clean cloth; thus gathered, the herb possessed various wonderful qualities, and was a powerful charm and preservative from misfortunes, and sudden accidents of all kinds.† Vervaine also was in great esteem with the druids, and many extraordinary virtues attributed to it. Besides these, a multitude of others might be found; but as their virtues depended on fond ceremonies, which all bordered upon the same superstition, it will be needless as well as tiresome, to proceed in the description of them.

One thing ought not to be omitted here, which is, some account of the Anguinum or serpent's egg, which the druids had in high esteem; and it was formed, as they pretended, by a great multitude of serpents close intertwined together, from the frothy saliva proceeding from their throats; when it was made, it was raised up in the air by their combined hissing; and to render it efficacious, it was to be caught in a clean white cloth, before it could fall to the ground; the person who performed this office, was obliged instantly to mount a swift horse, and ride away full speed, to avoid the pursuits of the serpents, who followed him with great rage, until they were stopped by some river. Having thus obtained the wonderful egg, he proceeded in the next place to try whether it was genuine or not; which was done by enchasing it in gold, and throwing it into a river; if it swam against the stream, its virtue was indisputable; and those who carried it about them, should, by its powerful influence, be superior to their adversaries in all disputes; it would also procure them the favour and friendship of great men.‡ But all this is, in general, looked upon as a fable of the druids, in order to procure the greater price for these eggs, which they sold at a high rate to the credulous people; it is true indeed, various opinions have been delivered upon this subject, yet none of them founded upon any certain facts.§

Feint is the light thrown upon the methods pursued by the druids in preparing their medicines; some few hints, it is true, we meet with, of their extracting the juice of herbs, their bruising and steeping them in water, infusing them in wine, boiling them, and making fumes from them,|| and the like; it also appears, that they were not ignorant of making salves and ointments, from vegetables.

\* Vide page 196 of this volume.

† Pliny, lib. xxiv. cap. 11.

‡ Ibid. lib. xxxix. cap. 3.

§ See Borlasi ut sup. &c.

|| Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. cap. 44. lib. xxiv. cap. 11. lib. xxv. cap. 9. et alia.

Eloquence of  
the druids.

When we remember the opportunities which the druids had of displaying their eloquence, we shall not so much wonder at the effect their speeches frequently had upon their hearers. They taught their pupils, and harangued to them concerning their doctrines; they made public speeches to the people, and instructed them in morality; they pleaded in courts of justice, and in great councils of the state declared their opinions; and either by inviting discourses, persuaded the chiefs to peace, or else in powerful declamations, used every incentive to provoke them to war; and we find their speeches were never in vain, for the greatest attention was always paid to their instructions and advice.\* The kings and leaders of the Britons who were instructed by the druids, partook of their eloquence; for always before an engagement, they harangued their army, and endeavoured to fire the minds of their soldiers with the hopes of glory and conquest, and to raise in them a contempt of death and danger. Though those elegant speeches which are handed down to us, by the Roman authors, of several British chiefs, are not entirely genuine, yet the effect which their exhortations are said to have produced upon their troops, may plainly prove the force and energy with which they were delivered.†

The druids accused of magic.

The druids have lain under very grievous accusations, on account of their magical juggles; but in Britain these delusions seem to have been carried to a more extraordinary length, and with greater success, than in any other Celtic nation; for they practised so many ceremonies and magical rites, that they were said to have exceeded even the Persians themselves;‡ and by this art they pretended to discover the designs of the gods, and foretell future events.§ The Eubate or Vates, also investigated the most sublime secrets of nature, and by auspices and sacrifices delivered out prophetic speeches.¶ Yet after all, what were these more than a sort of religious juggles, which were

\* The Gauls, and most likely the Britons, also had a god, named Ogmios, which in their language signified eloquence; they pictured him out as an old man, surrounded by a great multitude of people, all of whom were held by small chains, which came from his tongue to their ears; and the multitude were not displeased with their bondage, but on the contrary, looked with admiration upon him. Lucian (who tells this story) seeming to be surprised at this strange representation, was answered by a Gaulish druid, in the following manner: You will not wonder when I inform you, that contrary to the Greeks, we make Hercules (whom we call Ogmios) the god of eloquence, whereas they attribute that honour to Mercury, who is far infe-

rior to Hercules in power and strength. We make him an old man, because eloquence is never so forcible as when it proceeds from the mouth of the aged; and the relation that the mouth has to the ear, justifies that part of the picture which you wonder at, the slender chains reaching from the tongue of the deity, to the ears of the multitude, by which he holds them fast; nor is it any disgrace to represent Hercules in this fashion, for it was by his eloquence that he succeeded in every thing, and subdued the hearts of all men. Lucian in *Hercules Gallicus*.

† Vide page 17, 24 and 32 of this vol.

‡ Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* lib. xxx. cap. 1.

§ Mela, lib. iii. cap. 2.

¶ Ammian. Marcell. lib. xv. cap. 19.

practised

practised by the heathenish priests in all ages, and of almost all nations.

It seems certain that the druids knew the use of letters, because their public and private accounts were always kept in writing.\* The knowledge of the Greek alphabet, those of Gaul received from the Greek merchants at Marfaillies, who had fixed themselves there for the convenience of carrying on their trade with the Britons; for the merchandise from Britain was carried by land thither, and from thence sent to the different nations, where those merchants traded:† the druids of Britain, either had the same alphabet from their neighbours the Gauls, or else might learn it from the Greek merchants, who came frequently into the island.

Letters known  
to the druids  
and how.

The schools and seminaries of learning amongst the druids, were held in the deep recesses of groves and forests, and the caverns of the earth; in those places they instructed the youth ‡ who were committed to their charge, in the knowledge that was necessary for them, according to the station of life which it was intended they should fill. The coming of the Romans made a great alteration in the modes of learning amongst the Britons: Julius Agricola is the first we find who paid any attention to the instruction of the provincials; he, we are assured, took great care to have the sons of the chief Britons taught the liberal sciences; and such was the success, that they who had before despised the Roman language, now became desirous of acquiring it, and made a rapid progress in learning and eloquence.§ After the conversion of the Britons to christianity, the learning was chiefly confined to the priests and religious professors, and by degrees the monasteries became the great seminaries of learning.

Schools and  
seminaries of  
learning.

The sculptures and images of the Britons are all of them lost. The Gauls used to ornament their shields with images of beasts made of brass, and upon their helmets they placed horns of brass, figures of birds, or the faces of four-footed beasts:¶ and it is highly probable, that this art of embellishing their shields and helmets, was not unknown to the Britons; for every warlike people, seem to have taken great pride in the beauty of their arms; which they either traced with figures, or polished with extraordinary care. The Romans who carried the art of sculpture to great perfection, improved the state of it in Britain, a great variety of their bas-reliefs and images, have been found in various parts of the kingdom; and it was very soon after their first arrival, that they began to manifest proofs of their skill, for as early as the year 61, not twenty years from the inva-

The Art of sculpture.

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

§ Tacit. Vit. Agric.

† Strabo, lib. iv.

¶ Diod. Sic. lib. v.

‡ Mela, ut sup.

sion under Claudius Cæsar, we find a statue of Victory in the city of Carnulodunum.\*

Art of painting. We know but little of the state of painting, and the art of colouring amongst the Britons, before the arrival of the Romans; we read indeed, of their painting their bodies. The southern Britons when they went to war stained themselves all over with woad, which made them of a blue colour;† and this they did to appear more formidable to their enemies. Again at their public feasts and solemn festivals, all of them, whether men, women, or children, were stripped naked, and stained over with woad, to such a degree, that they appeared like Ethiopians:‡ yet this was but a kind of wash, or plain colour, uniformly laid all over them. In the north the art of painting, or staining their skins, was carried to greater perfection; for there we find them picturing upon their bodies the representation of herbs, flowers, trees, and animals of all kinds.§

The Romans improve the art of painting.

The Romans, who were also well acquainted with the arts of design and colouring, without doubt, instructed the Britons in the same; and this we may be partly assured of, from the pictures and delineations of their Gods, which remained upon the walls of their cities in the days of Gildas Badonicus; yet because they might be either greatly defaced by time, or the work of ruder hands; they are said, by that pious author, to have been hideous and ugly; but the prejudices which he might have conceived against them, as the reliques of idolatry, may have caused him to look upon them in this frightful light;|| or perhaps many of them may have been intended to represent satyrs and sylvan gods, who are always drawn as deformed and ugly.

The art of poetry the bards excel in.

Their remarkable fondness for poetry, may be easily conceived, from their laws and doctrines, whether religious or moral, being all in verse; the whole employment of the bards, was poetry of one kind or other; their compositions were various; the actions of great men they celebrated in heroic poems,\*\* which they sung to the sweet sounds of the lyre;†† again they would compose satirical poems, in which they censured the vices and immoralities of the age;‡‡ and such was the power and harmony of their numbers, when they touched upon the pathetic, and strove to move the imaginations of men, that they would

\* Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

† Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. cap. 10.

‡ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxii. cap. 1.

§ Herodian, lib. iii. cap. 46.

|| The words of Gildas describing these pictures of their gods, are as follows: "quorum nonnulla, lineamentis ad huc deformibus intra vel extra deferta moenia solito more rigentia, torvis vultibus intueamur." Gild. Hist. cap. 2.

\*\* Diod. Sic. lib. v.

†† Possidonius of Apamea informs us, that it was a custom common amongst the Celtic princes, when they went to war, to carry a certain number of poets with them, who eat at their tables, and sang their praises to the people, who gathered round them in crowds. Athenæus, lib. vi. cap. 12.

‡‡ Diod. Sic. lib. v.

run in between two armies, just upon the point of engaging in battle, and by their songs overcome the passions of the rough warriors, and make them throw down their arms;\* on the contrary, no doubt, when they were desirous of blowing up the flames of war and sedition in the minds of their hearers, they had other songs to raise their courage, and let loose the fury of resentment in their breasts.

Music seems always to have been happily united with the flights of poetry by the British bards; their poems they constantly sung to the harp; and their taste in music, as well as in the expression of their words, is plainly proved, by the wonderful effect it had upon the surrounding multitude, who listened to their strains.

The harp or lyre, is said to have been invented by the Scythians; and it was used by all the Celtic nations; in its primitive state, it had only four or five strings or thongs, which were made of an ox's hide; and it was usually played upon with a plectrum, made of the jaw-bone of a goat;† but by degrees it was improved, and became a very excellent instrument; the form of those used by the British bards, as well as the number of strings wherewith they were strung, or how they were played upon, are circumstances we have no means left to discover.

Learning, and every other polite art, gradually lost ground, some time before the departure of the Romans from Britain; and after they had finally taken their leave, they sunk entirely to the ground: all their records of antient times were lost or destroyed,‡ so that the bare outlines of the people, and the transactions of this important period is all we could trace out, from the cursory mention we meet with of them in the Roman authors.

\* Diod. Sic. ut sup.

† Pelloutier, Hist. Celt. cap. 9. p. 360. note 30. & vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. v. I.

‡ Gildas Sapiens, himself a Briton, declares himself unsatisfied, whether the ancient Britons ever had any records or writings, to transmit their history and original to posterity; and therefore plainly confesses, "that he took all his history out of foreign writers, and not out of any writings or records left by his own

"countrymen, which were either lost or burnt by the enemy at home, or carried by exiles into foreign countries." Gild. Hist. And Ninnius in the preface to his History of Britain, complains, that the greatest scholars amongst the Britons had but little learning, and that they had left no memorials; and confesses, that whatever he had written, was collected out of the annals and chronicles of the holy fathers. Pref. Ninn. Hist. Brit.

The music of the bards.

The lyre by whom invented.

The decrease of learning amongst the Britons.

## C H A P. XI.

*Description of the Britons, and their particular Manners.*

The face of the  
country in an-  
cient times.

GREAT Britain, which is now so fair and flourishing, was in the times we are treating of, little better than a wild desert, covered with woods, and full of bogs, fens, and marshes; except perhaps some few countries in the southern parts, which lay near the sea-shore, where the inhabitants being more civilized, had begun to cultivate the land, and sow corn. Many of these marshes were drained by the Romans, who made solid roads through them, from one part of their possessions in the island to another; they also built bridges, and did every thing necessary for the improvement of the country. In Calidonia, where these conquerors seldom went, such improvements did not take place; for when the emperor Severus, A. D. 207, with his army, invaded the northern nations, he met with almost insurmountable obstacles, from the wild and uncultivated state of the country; so that in order to prosecute his march, he was obliged to cut down whole forests, dry up morasses, build bridges, and fill up the bogs; till at last his troops were so wearied, and harraßed with a continual succession of difficulties, that many, unable to proceed any further, begged of their companions to kill them, lest they should fall alive into the hands of their enemies. It is said, that the emperor lost no fewer than fifty thousand of his troops in this unprofitable expedition.\*

The persons of  
the Britons,

The Britons, in general, appear to have been a tall,† strong, nimble, and comely people; though they were not all alike, for the Calidoni-ans are described as the strongest built, and the best able to endure hardships; for they were accustomed, from the nature of their climate, to fatigues of all kinds; they could endure hunger and cold with great patience, and would remain for several days in the fens and morasses, up to the neck in water, without touching food of any kind:‡ these men, from their large limbs, and red hair, were thought to have come originally from Germany. The Silures, were remarkable for their swarthy complexions, and their hair, which was generally curled: these have been thought to have come from Spain, whilst those who possessed the sea-coasts opposite to Gaul, are universally agreed to have been like the Gauls, and most likely sprung from them.§ As the Celtic

\* Xipil. ex Dio. Nicæo. in Sever.

† Strabo says, that he saw certain British youths at Rome, who were one foot and a half higher than the tallest person there: he remarks that they were fairer in person than the Gauls, but did not stand ve-

ry straight upon their legs; nor had they any very fine features, or elegance of shape or limbs. Strabo, lib. iv.

‡ Xiphil. ex Dio. in Sever.

§ Tacit. Vit. Agric.

nations

nations in general are said to have been remarkable for their blue eyes, we may fairly judge that those of the Britons were the same. As the Britons were a people of good constitutions, and lived in a simple manner, we need not wonder that they should arrive at great ages. Some of them are said to have exceeded one hundred years.\*

In genius the Britons excelled the Gauls, who were an acute and ready people.† In their tempers they were proud and haughty, contemning danger, and swift to revenge; they were brave and valiant in the field of battle, but cruel and bloody to the enemies whom they had conquered.‡ Curiosity, credulity, and fickleness, were the national foibles both of the Gauls and Britons; and to all these, at times, were owing the misfortunes of both these people.§ On the other hand, the Britons were open, generous, grateful, and docile; being perfectly simple and honest in all their dealings,|| they submitted with pleasure to what was mild and legal, but were impatient of restraint, and opposed courageously all tyranny, and attempts to enslave them; but of all others, this was the strongest characteristic of the Calidonians, many of whom put their wives and children to death with their own hands, rather than they should fall into the power of the Romans;\*\* they also were equally remarkable for their social affection and duty towards their parents.

Another remarkable part of the character of the ancient Britons, was their hospitality to strangers; towards whom they always behaved with the greatest kindness, and received them with joy and festivity, holding nothing too good for them that their house afforded.†† With respect to

The general character of the Britons.

The hospitality of the Britons, and their excellencies.

\* Plutarch declares that some of them lived to one hundred and twenty years. Vide Camden, in his Preface to his Brit.

† Tacit. Vita Agric.

‡ This one may find by their behaviour to the Roman captives, whom they took in the famous revolt under Boudicca, queen of the Icenians, see page 23, of this volume. Diodorus Siculus and Strabo both inform us that the Gauls used to cut off the heads of their enemies whom they had slain in battle; and such as were of a high rank they anointed with a certain mixture, to preserve them, and kept them in their houses to shew to strangers, to whom they boasted of their own great acts, or the valour of their predecessors; and shewed those heads as proof of the truth of their assertions. There seems but little doubt to be made of the Britons doing the same, since in most other matters they followed the Gauls so closely. Diod. Sic. lib. v. Strabo, lib. iv.

§ Cæsar informs us that it was the custom with the Gauls to oblige travellers to

stop, even against their wills, and they would enquire of them the news of the time, what they had heard, or might know, concerning any matter; and the common people would crowd round the merchants in the towns, and oblige them to inform them from what country they came, and what news they have there. Influenced by such reports and informations, they would credulously determine matters of the greatest moment, and frequently to their great disadvantage; since they gave credit to every doubtful report, and many imposed on them things invented to please them. Cæsar. Bel. Gal. lib. iv. cap. 5.

|| Diodorus Siculus says of the Britons, that their manners were plain and simple, and that they were absolute strangers to the pernicious cunning and dissimulation of the generality of people in his time. Diod. Sic. lib. v. cap. 21.

\*\* Tacit. Vita Agric.

†† Diod. Sic. lib. v.

their.

their chastity, it seems their ideas were gross and unpolished.\* As they had not wherewithal to live luxuriously, so their frugality is not to be commended, for they were very easily drawn into all kinds of excess,† and drunkenness was a vice they frequently gave way to; they would often drink until they were entirely overcome with the liquor, or inflamed with a kind of madness; and the bad effects of this vice was, that thereby sudden quarrels happened amongst them; for when they had drank freely, they would start up and fight furiously, without the least regard to their lives or safety.‡ Another blemish in their character, was, their proneness to public robberies, especially in the north; for the Maxatæ and Calidonians supported themselves in great measure by plunder and spoils, which they took from their neighbours in the south, whom they frequently distressed to the greatest degree in a most cruel and barbarous manner.§

Ranks of men  
amongst the  
Britons.

Of the ranks of men amongst both the Gauls and Britons we find but two sorts, that enjoyed any considerable honours, and these were the druids and the nobles: concerning the druids, enough has been said already; the nobles, or heads of clans, as many of them as formed a community, or state, were obliged, when any war broke out, to join in the prosecution of it; and as any one of these were superior either in quality or power, so he had more retainers about him, and in this his honour chiefly consisted. The common people were looked upon almost in the light of slaves, and could do nothing of their own accord; neither were they admitted to any councils, most of them being oppressed with debt, the weight of taxes, or the injustice of the great, submitted themselves to the vassalage of the nobles, who had the same power over them as if they were slaves;|| and indeed they were frequently abused, and sold as such.\*\*

Behaviour of  
the Britons to-  
wards the fair-  
sex.

We have the greatest reason to believe that the Britons behaved with all becoming decency and respect towards the fair-sex. We find that the brutal carriage of the Romans towards the daughters of Boudicea, and the affronts which they put upon her, were great incentives to that destructive revolt that broke out soon after.†† What their ceremonies of marriage were, or what the particular employment of their wives, is not known;‡‡ but without doubt it was their charge to overlook the affairs of the house, and pay attention to such business as more properly belongs to women than men; and had the care of their children until they were of

\* Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. v. & vide page 248 of this volume.

† Tacit. Vita Agric.

‡ Diod. Sic. ut sup.

§ See the first part of the Chronicle.

|| Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

\*\* Strabo, lib. iv.

†† Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 10.

‡‡ Cæsar relates a remarkable circumstance relative to the marriage dowry

amongst the Gauls. "Whatever sum the husbands receive with their wives, by way of dowry, (says he) so much of their own possessions (a calculation being made) they join to that fortune; a clear account is kept of this money, and its interest preserved, and the longest liver of the two inherits the whole." Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi. cap. 17.



fit age to be put under the tuition of the druids. Their household furniture we can by no means pretend to display; their beds, indeed, might be nothing more than skins of beasts, spread upon the floor within their little cots.

The original diet of the Britons was plain and simple, nor do they seem to have had any idea of luxury in food before the arrival of the Romans. Some of the northern nations lie under the horrid accusation of eating their fellow-creatures;\* but this heavy charge is thought by modern authors to have been groundless, and only to have arisen from mistake, or wrong information; which opinion (as every one ought to think as charitably as possible) is not without a tolerable foundation.†

The southern Britons had great plenty, as well as variety of provisions, though they superstitiously abstained from eating hares, hens, and geese;‡ however, a bird, named *Chenerotes*, (supposed to be a kind of wild fowl) was in the highest esteem amongst them.§ They had also a great plenty of venison, besides their tame cattle, as oxen, sheep, and goats, which they drove about from place to place, and which, indeed, constituted the chief wealth of the inland Britons; all these, it seems, they killed and dressed for their use, as their necessity required them.

It is remarked of the Celtic nations in general, that they eat very little bread at their entertainments, but a great deal of flesh, which they either boiled in water, or broiled upon the coals, or roasted on spits; and of the Gauls, in particular, it is said, that near the place where they intended to make an entertainment they usually kindled great fires, whereon they placed pots, and near them spits, on which they roasted large joints of meat of various kinds.¶ The Gauls and Britons had salt, with which they used to salt their provisions, and preserve them. In ancient time salt was a part of the commodities which the Britons received from the Phœnicians, in exchange for their tin and lead;‡‡ but, some time after, they learned a method of making it themselves, instructed, perhaps, by the Gauls, who pursued the following process:—They raised a pile of trees, chiefly of oaks and hazels, and having set it on fire, burnt it to charcoal, and whilst it was red hot, they poured salt water upon it, which produced a kind of salt of a blackish hue.††

Their cattle afforded them milk, and amongst the more civilized Britons perhaps the art of making cheese and butter might not be unknown;‡‡‡ but we are assured that the more northern nations were totally

\* Diod. Sic. lib. v. cap. 32. & Hieron. adver. Soven. lib. ii.

† Dr. Henry's History of Britain, vol. I. pages 478 & 479.

‡ Cas. Bel. Gal. lib. v.

§ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. x. cap. 22.

¶ Pausanias, & Diod. Sic. lib. v.

\*\* Strabo, lib. iv.

†† Tacit. Annal. lib. xiii. sub fine.

‡‡ Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xxxi. cap. 7.

‡‡ For it is thought that the words of Strabo, declaring "that some of the ancient Britons were so very ignorant, that though they had great quantities of milk, yet they knew not how to make cheese, &c." ought not to be taken in a general sense, as regarding the whole island, but only that part of it that was most unpollished. Vide Strabo, lib. iv.

ignorant of it; nor had they such variety of food as was produced in the south, for they inhabited the barren mountains, and their country was full of morasses and marshes; neither had they any cultivated lands, so that their whole provision consisted of milk and flesh, either of their tame cattle, or such as they got by hunting, or wild fruits and roots; for we are assured they would not eat fish, though their rivers abounded with them: if they ever fed upon greater dainties than such as are just mentioned, those were only the spoils which they had taken from their southern neighbours.\*

The drinks  
usual amongst  
the Britons.

The drinks of the Gauls and Britons were chiefly ale, or mead; the latter made of honey, diluted with water, and fermented; and the former, which seems to have been their more common drink, was usually made of barley; the grain being steeped in water, was made to germinate, by which its spirit was excited, and set at liberty; it was then dried and ground, and after infused into a certain quantity of water, and being fermented, became a warm, strengthening, and intoxicating liquor:† when they found a deficiency of barley, several other grains were substituted in its stead, as wheat, rye, oats, and millet. Wine they had but small quantities of, which was imported by the merchants who traded with them, but they were most immoderately fond of it; and when they had it in their possession, would seldom leave it till they had either drank it all out, or so far inebriated themselves as to be deprived of all sensibility.‡

Manner of sit-  
ting at meat.

When they sat at meat, it was not upon seats or benches, but upon the ground; whereon, instead of carpets, they spread the skins of wolves, or dogs. The guests all of them sat round about, and the food was placed before them, and every one took his part; they were waited upon by the younger people of both sexes.§ Such as had not skins were content with a little hay or straw, which was laid under them.

Exercises of the  
Britons.

The exercises of the Britons were robust and manly; they practised, without doubt, like other barbarous nations, feats of war, and strove to make themselves expert in the use of arms. They do not seem to have

\* Xiphil. *em* Dio. Nic. in Sever.

† Isidorus Orig. lib. xx. cap. 2. To the same purpose Diodorus Siculus, "The Gauls made a strong liquor of barley, which they call Zithus; they also made a drink of honey, diluted with water." lib. v.

‡ Ibid. In the Scottish islands (where many of the old British customs are still preserved) "The manner of drinking (says Martin) used by the chief men, is called in their language *Streak*, i. e. *around*, for the company sat in a circle, and the cup-bearer filled round to them, and all was drank out, whatever liquor it was, whether weak

or strong. They continued drinking sometimes twenty-four, and sometimes forty-eight hours. It was reckoned a piece of manhood to drink until they were drunk, and there were two men with a barrow attending punctually on such occasions. They stood at the door until some became drunk, and they carried them upon the barrow to bed, and returned again to their post as long as any continued fresh; and so carried off the whole company one by one as they became drunk." Martin's Description of the Western Islands, p. 106.

§ Diod. Sic. lib. v.

dedicated their leisure hours to constant idleness, or dissipation, as the Germans were wont to do, but attended to recreations of various sorts. Of their surprising agility and alertness we have many proofs; they were swift of foot, and incomparable swimmers.\*

The Gauls and Britons burned the bodies of their dead; and their funerals, according to the quality of the person, were grand and magnificent: around the pile the friends and relations of the deceased were assembled, and threw into the flames whatever he thought valuable in his life-time; particularly his arms, and such animals as were favourites. In ancient times it had been customary also to burn his slaves and servants with him, especially if he were of high quality,† that he might not go unattended into the other world; and, for the same reason, frequently his dearest friends would rush voluntarily into the fire, in order to accompany their departed companion to his station in the future life.‡ When the ashes were gathered up, with them was buried the bonds and contracts for money, that were made during the life-time of the deceased, that he might shew them in the other world, and exact the money of his debtors, which was due to him.§

The dead body being burned, and the ashes collected together, the last sad office of the friends of the deceased was to lay them in some place of rest. The common sort of people most likely had their ashes laid in a hole dug in the earth, near where the funeral had been performed, and over the grave might be raised a little hillock of earth, or turfs. Those of more consequence were put into the stone chest, or kist vean, a rude monument, frequently found in various parts of Britain, and was usually composed of five large flat stones; four of them made the sides, the fifth served by way of cover; sometimes these were placed on the top of a high hillock, or barrow; at other times a hill was made over them: the barrows were usually made of earth, though often ornamented with large stones set round about them, or with a little trench. Kings and nobles had more obvious monuments raised over their ashes: these are called Cromlêh's stone tables, and are usually formed by one large flat stone, laid on three or four other stones, which are set upright, or post-ways, to sustain it.||

\* Thus Boudicea, in her famous speech to the Britons, remonstrates, "If we fly, we are so swift of foot, that the Romans cannot overtake us; if they fly, they cannot escape our pursuit. We can pass rivers by swimming which they can hardly pass in boats." Xiphil. ex Dio. in Nerone.

† Cæf. Bcl. Gal. lib. v.

‡ Mela, lib. iii. cap. 2.

§ Ibid.

|| Some authors, instead of Cromlêh, write Cromlech. See two of these ancient monuments, plate III. For a further account of them, the reader is referred to the first volume of the *Hojda Angel cýnnari*, or View of the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants of England, page 61.

## C H A P. XII.

*Military Conduct and Fortifications of the Romans.*

**B**EFORE we conclude this part of the Chronicle, it may not be amiss to explain the manner and nature of the Roman fortifications, that we may be able, in the future volumes, to determine which of the various entrenchments remaining in Britain may, or ought to be ascribed to that people. To set the whole in as clear a light as possible, the following extract from Polybius is given, which shews in what manner the armies of the Romans were constituted, and how encamped.\*

Roman tribunes, how chosen.

“ After the Romans have elected their consuls, they create military tribunes; they chuse fourteen out of those who have been five years in the war, and ten more of those that have carried their arms ten years: for all their citizens must bear arms till the forty-sixth year of their age. The horse must serve ten years, and the foot sixteen; except those who are worth above seventy livres, and those they reserve for the marine. But if the commonwealth have an extraordinary occasion, the foot are bound to serve twenty years.

The manner of election.

“ None can exercise the office of a magistrate that has not served ten campaigns. When the consuls have occasion to raise soldiers, they cause proclamation to be made, that all that are able to bear arms shall assemble together at such a time; and this they do once a year. When the day is come, and the Romans who are able to go to war are assembled at the capitol, the youngest of the military tribunes divide them into four bodies, according to the order of the people, or of the generals of the army, because they first divide their troops into four legions, and the four tribunes who were first chosen are ordered into the first legion, the three next for the second, the four next after for the third, and the last for the fourth. In the first legion are two of the oldest made tribunes, in the second are the three next, in the third the two next after them, and in the fourth the three last.

Legions, how chosen.

“ After the legions were thus chosen, and divided into such sort, that every legion has the same number of leaders, the tribunes of each legion being set at a distance, draw the tribus (wherein the names were contained) by lot. They are called as they are drawn, and afterward they chuse four young men of the same age and stature. The tribunes of the first legion chuse first, those of the second, the second, and so of the rest; except the number of the triarii, which never changes. The youngest are obliged to wear a sword, and carry a small javelin, with a target; the target is firm, being made for that purpose, and big enough to defend him that carries it, for it is round, and a foot and a

\* Polybius, lib. vi.

half in diameter. Besides this, the velites wear a light head-piece, on the top of which they commonly put a wolf's paw, or something like it, which serves both for a covering, and a mark for the captains, to know them upon occasion. The javelin of the velites is of wood, and commonly about two cubits long, and finger thick; it is armed with iron about half a foot, and at the point so fine, that it bends at the first blow, so that when they lance against their enemies they cannot use the same weapon again, otherwise it would serve both, and he that lanceth would find his enemies weapons to fight against himself.

"The next to the velites are the hastati, and they are appointed to carry the arms which they keep in their houses, and chiefly the buckler. The hastati, how appointed, and their arms. Its superficies, bending outwards, are two feet and a half, and four feet long, or at farthest does not exceed half a foot more. It is made of two boards glewed together, covered with thick cloth glewed in like manner, and over all the rest a calf's skin; round it there is a border of iron, to defend it against all cutting strokes, and give it shape; in the midst there is an iron shell, or boss, to sustain the blow of a stone, or the push of a lance, or any other arms whatsoever. The spearmen have, beside the buckler, a Spanish sword, which they wear on their right side, fit either for thrusting or cutting, with an edge on both sides, made of a strong well-tempered blade. Beside all this, they carry two great javelins, a brass helmet, and armour to cover their thighs and legs; some of these javelins are thicker, some more slender: of the largest sort, the round ones were of four fingers diameter, and the others as much on the sides; the lesser sort resembles our common darts. These every soldier carries with the arms above-mentioned. The shaft of these javelins is three yards long, with iron in form of a hook, and pointed at the end, of an equal length of the shaft. This iron, which reaches as far as the middle of the shaft, is firmly secured, and riveted with nails, to prevent its being loosened, or breaking by any accident where it is joined. On the top of their helmet is fastened a small coronet, or circle of iron, with three feathers, red or black, in the midst, a foot and a half in length, which towering so far above the head, make those who wear them appear big and terrible to their enemies. The ordinary soldiers wear on their breasts a plate, twelve inches on all sides; but those who are worth more than one hundred and fifty pounds estate, wear a coat of mail instead of this breast-plate.

"The principes and the triarii bear the same arms, except that the triarii, instead of javelins, carry a sort of half-pike. The principes and the triarii, their arms, and rank. Out of these fighting-men, except the youngest, which were the velites, are chosen ten commanders, all experienced in the art of war; and after this, by a second election, ten more. All these officers have the title of captains, with power to nominate ten sergeants in their divisions. Next, according to their several ages, the whole body is divided into ten parts, exclusive of the velites, and each division hath two commanders, and two sergeants out of those

those before chosen. The velites are equally distributed to each party, and each part have the name of a band, company or colours given to it, and the captains are called centurions. These chuse each in their respective companies two ensigns, the most robust and brave fellows they can find. Doubtless it is a very prudent method to place two commanders to each division; for, considering all uncertainties, how either may behave themselves, and the risques of war, it may not be safe to suffer companies to hazard the want of a commander. The eldest of these captains, or he who is first chosen, leads the right, and the other on the left, and either in the absence of his partner, leads the whole body. The qualities which the Romans desire in a commander, are not so much adventurous boldness, as skill in military affairs, good conduct, and counsel: nor do they ever set so high a value on those who are forward to engage and expose themselves freely, as those who resist an enemy when he presses them, and rather die than quit their post.

Their cavalry,  
how divided.

"In the same manner they divide their cavalry, into ten parts, each of which has three captains, who chuse three lieutenants of their troops. The eldest, or first elect, command the troops, and the others are but decurions, or commanders of ten. In the absence of the eldest captain, the second acts in his place. The armour of the horse is the same with the Greeks; formerly they did not wear cuirasses, but a sort of breeches; by this means they were lighter, and could dismount more readily, but fighting thus unarmed, were more exposed to danger. Their javelins were useless to them for two reasons; first, because slender, and bending with their weight, they were subject to be broken by the agitation of the horse; the second, because being armed with iron at one end only, they were only proper for a single blow, and being broken on one side, were rendered useless. They bore a buckler made of an ox's hide, which resembled certain leaves stuck through, as is used in sacrifices; and these being not firm enough to make any great opposition, were of little use at best; but if they happened to be thorough wet by a good shower of rain, became wholly unserviceable. For this reason they laid all these things aside, introducing the Greek arms, by which they were able to secure their blow, the javelin being firm, and capable of being used on either side. The Romans finding by experience how convenient these arms were, soon embraced them, no people being more docile, or apt to change, when in the stead of their ancient customs they can introduce better.

Other particular  
customs.

"When the tribunes of the army have finished the division, and disposed their affairs as above, they dismiss the soldiers till the time arrives, upon which they are sworn to meet at the place nominated by the consul. It happens ordinarily, that each consul assigns a different rendezvous, and orders a separate meeting of their legions, each consul having a moiety of the auxiliary forces of the allies, and two Roman legions at his disposal. All who are listed meet without fail at the time and place appointed;

pointed; nor are any who were sworn admitted to offer any excuse for their absence, without some extraordinary accident or impossibility. At this meeting of the allies and Roman forces, twelve provosts, commissioned by the consuls, have the direction of all matters, and assign to each man his duty; but in the first place they proceed to chuse out of the allies who are present, divers horse and foot, who are to be near the person of the consul on all occasions which may require an approved courage, and these are called extraordinaries. In all other respects the infantry of the allies is equal in number to the Roman legions, but their cavalry is double; out of which are usually employed for extraordinaries of horse, the third, and of foot, the fifth part; the remainder is divided, and called, one the right, the other the left wing. In the next place, the tribunes take the legions with their auxiliaries, and encamp them, which they perpetually do in the same manner and form. Wherefore, I shall proceed in the next place to shew the manner of marching, encamping, and disposing their troops in battle; and here I cannot doubt but all those who have any curiosity for any commendable knowledge, will give just attention to a matter which is so memorable, and so well deserves their notice.

"This, then, is their manner of encamping:—Having chosen out a proper ground, they erect the prætorium, or general's pavilion, in the most convenient place, to observe what passes, and give orders. After they have planted the standard in the place of the pavilion, they proceed to set out a square of two acres of land, each side being one hundred feet distant from the standard; the Roman legions are posted on that side which appears most proper for forage and water. There are six tribunes in each legion, as was before recited; and each consul having two legions with him, it is evident there must be twelve tribunes in both armies. The tents of the tribunes are erected in a right line, all parts of which an equal distance of fifty feet from the side of the square appointed for them; and this space is large enough to receive their horses, their other beasts of burthen, and the rest of their baggage: their tents extend all the back of the square, looking outwards.

"And here the reader must observe, that this is the front of the whole figure, and that we shall hereafter call it so. The tents of tribunes are equally distant from each other, and make in their tract a space equal in extent to that of the Roman legions in depth. After this, they measure out a space in front, directly opposite to these tents, and draw a right line of equal length with that on which the tribunes' tents are erected, and parallel to it; here they begin to lodge the legions, which is done in the following manner: they divide the former line in the midst, then draw a strait line from the point of section, and lodge on both sides of this line the cavalry of the two legions opposite to each other, leaving between an empty space, or way, fifty feet broad, through the midst of which the former line passes. The tents of the infantry

Method of encamping.

Different parts of the army, how lodged.

fantry and cavalry are disposed in the same manner; the figure of the ground which both occupy making a square. This looks towards the ways, or streets, between both, and its length, which is a hundred feet, is the length of the way; and for the most it is so contrived, that the depth and wideness have the same measure, except the lodgment of the allies. But when that armies are greater, they increase the dimensions. But the tents of the horse terminating exactly in the midst of the tents of the tribunes, there is a way which traverses the right line before-mentioned, and the space before the tribunes' tents. For the rest, all passages are disposed in such manner they resemble streets, or rows, part foot, part horse, being extended along each side.

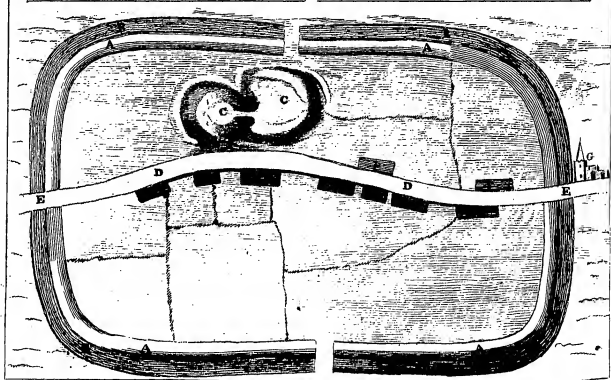
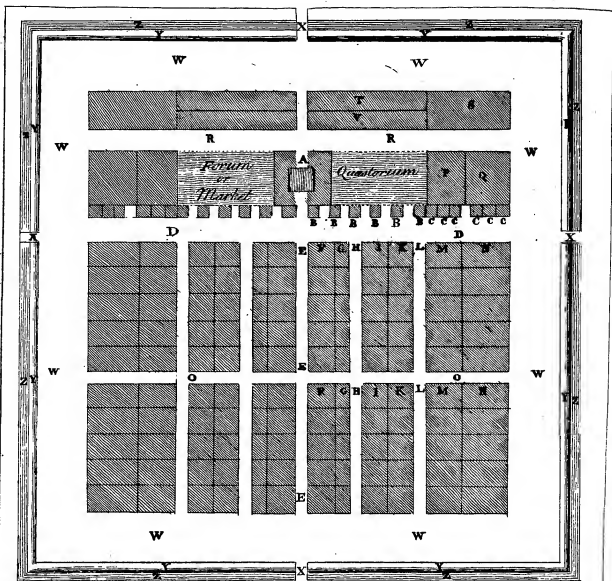
The triarvi,  
how lodged in  
the camp.

"The triarvi of the two legions are posted behind the cavalry, of which we have been speaking, each company answering to the other in the same figure, in such manner, that although they touch each other on the back, the triarvi face those of the opposite side, and the breadth of the way where each band of the triarvi is posted, does not exceed half its length, these being for the most part one half less than the other. For this reason, though the number of men be not always equal, and the space in which they are posted be different, yet the length is equal. The principes are posted opposite to the triarvi, with a way of fifty paces between them; and in going from hence, to the space which I before mentioned by the tribunes' tents, there are two other banks or rows, which begin at the same straight line with the horse, that is, at the space of a hundred feet, before the tribunes' lodgment, and terminate at the other end of the camp, which we before called the front of the whole figure.

The hastati,  
how lodged.

"The hastati or spear-men, are posted near the principes, but on their back, like the triarvi, facing the horse on the opposite side. Now having observed, that each legion consists of ten companies, according to the division before made. All these alleys or streets, are of the same length, and end in the front of the camp, and it is on that side all the last companies are posted. In the back of the hastati, at the distance of fifty feet, are planted the cavalry of the allies, beginning in the same line, and ending in the same straight line with them. The infantry of the allies is equal in number to the Romans, but it is lessened a third part by taking away the extraordinaries. And for this reason, in encamping they increase the breadth, to equal them in length to the Roman legions. After the streets or rows are marked out, which never exceed five, the lodgments of the foot of the allies is next set out, who are planted on the back of the horse, but the depth is increased in proportion; for the rest, this infantry looks towards the retrenchment of camp on both sides; but the captains of each company take the principal lodgments on each side. But in disposing the cavalry in this manner, the sixth company is separated from the fifth, by an interval of fifty feet; and the same thing is observed in the infantry. By this





this means a way is formed which crosses all other rows, and makes a line parallel to the range of the tribunes' tents. The Romans give it the name of the fifth, because it runs the whole length of each fifth range of lodgments. As for the void space behind the tribunes' tents on each side the prætorium, the one side is allotted for the markets, and the other is occupied by the quæstor and the ammunition. On each side the tribunes towards their utmost tent, a little falling back, are volunteers, who came into the army out of respect to the consul. These are planted the whole length of the camp, some on the quæstor's side, others on the side of the market. In all other respects these are not posted there, but when the army marched, or in any action, they guard the consul and quæstor, being ever near their persons.

“ With these they join the flower of the foot, on the side of the entrenchment, whose office is the same with the horse before-mentioned: after them is left a space of fifty feet broad, parallel to the tribunes' tents, which extending the length of the market, prætorium, and the quæstor's apartment, is continued from the retrenchment on one side, and to that on the other. On the upper side of the way the extraordinary horse of the allies are planted, opposite to the market, the prætorium, and the quæstor's quarters; but in midst of the tents a way of fifty feet broad is left, passing before the prætorium, which crossing the other way in that place, traverses the camp, making a straight line from one entrenchment to the other. Behind these horse, are lodged the extraordinary foot of the allies, which looks towards the entrenchments and the last side of the camp. The remaining void space on each side, is allotted for the reception of foreigners, or allies, whose occasions may bring them into the camp. All these things thus disposed, the form of the camp is a square of equal sides, and the regular position of the streets, tents, and all other things, make it very much resemble a town. On every side between the entrenchment and the tents, is a vacant space of two hundred paces, very commodious for receiving a multitude of different things; here they kept their own cattle, and those they have taken from the enemy, in the night-time; and this space is very useful, the enemy not being able, in case they make an attack by night, to sling either darts, or fire, unless by a great chance, and then cannot do any considerable damage, by reason of the greatness of the distance, and the tents which are about it.\*

Other divisions  
of the camp.

Thus

\* That the reader may the better understand the whole form of the Roman camp, according to the description of Polybius, we have subjoined plate VI. where, at the top, a plan is accurately drawn out. The references may be made as follow: A, the prætorium, or square, for the general's tent, two hundred feet every way; in this

reference we have marked but one side all through, the other exactly corresponded with it. BBBBBB, six of the tribunes' tents, the other six are opposite on the other side of the prætorium; each of these squares are fifty feet every way. On one side of the prætorium is the market, two hundred feet broad, and three hundred and fifty feet

The form of the camp when two armies were joined.

" Thus it is easy to know how spacious the camp is, and what number it is able to receive, whether a legion consisting of four or five thousand men, since I have shewn the dimension of every part, its streets, and other particulars; but if the number of the allies be greater, whether they come first or after with their troops, as necessity or occasion requires, they are lodged on one side of the prætorium, and the market is removed to the quæstor's apartment, or, if the number of those be great, who begin to march; when the army is too big, a row is added on each side of the Roman legions, towards the side of the camp. But if the two consuls and the four legions join in one camp, you must fancy them after the manner of two armies, joined back to back, dispersed as before described, and in the place where their extraordinaries are posted. Thus the figure will be oblong, the ground twice as spacious, and the circuit once and a half greater. In short, whenever the two consuls are in the same camp, they order every thing in the same manner as when their camps are separate, except that the quæstor, the market, and the prætorium, are then in the middle between both armies.

The administration of the oath.

" After the encampment is made, all the tribunes meet, and administer an oath to every man in the legion, as well freemen as slaves, who all one after another swear, That they will not rob in camp; and in case any one finds any thing by chance, he shall acquaint the tribunes with it. Next, two companies of the principes and hastati of each legion are

feet in length; opposite to this, on the other side of the prætorium, is the quæstor's lodging, of equal length and breadth with the forum. C C C C C, squares fifty feet every way, the lodging of the præfecti. D D, the *via principalis*, or principal street, one hundred feet in width. E E E E, another street, dividing the lodgings in the midst, and passing from each gate to the prætorium. F F, two long divisions, each one hundred feet broad, and five hundred long, divided into ten squares; in these were lodged the ten companies of cavalry. G G, two other divisions of equal length, only fifty feet wide; these are the lodgings for ten companies of the triarii. H H, a street fifty feet broad. I I, two long divisions, one hundred feet wide, and of equal length with the former, containing ten squares, for the lodging of the ten companies of the principes. K K, two other divisions, equal in length and breadth with the former, the lodgings of the ten companies of the hastati, or spear-men. L L, another street, fifty feet wide. M M, two other long divisions, one hundred and fifty feet wide, but of equal length with the former; these are the lodgings for the auxiliary cavalry. N N, other divisions, two hundred feet wide, but of equal length with the former, the lodgings of the auxiliary infantry. O O, a transverse street. P, the lodging for the select voluntary cavalry. Q, the select voluntary foot; these, with the former, occupied a space three hundred and fifty feet long, and two hundred broad. R R, another transverse street, one hundred feet broad. S, the lodgings of the foreigners and allies, occupying a space of three hundred and fifty feet long, and one hundred and fifty broad. T, the extraordinary infantry. V, the extraordinary cavalry; these together occupied a space of four hundred and fifty feet long, and one hundred and fifty broad. W W W W, &c. a void space all around the whole camp, two hundred feet broad. X X X X, the four principal entrances, each fifty feet wide. Y Y Y Y, &c. the vallum. Z Z Z Z, &c. the fosse, or ditch. The reader will observe, that this camp is composed of two legions, and their auxiliaries, who are lodged exactly in the same manner, one legion on one side the street, E E E E, and the other on the other.

appointed

appointed to guard the tribunes' tents, the Romans sometimes spending whole days in that space, for which reason they are extremely curious in keeping it clean. As for the other eighteen companies, each tribune draws three by lot, for there is in each division which are made of them the same number of *hastati*, *principes*, and six military tribunes; out of each company of these, three serve the tribunes alternately in the following manner:—When the camp is marked out, these companies pitch their tents, erect them, and making the ground level, securing the baggage; if occasion requires, they keep two watches of four centinels, one of which is kept before the tents, the other behind, near the horses. Now each tribune having three companies under his command, and each company consisting of a hundred men, exclusive of the *triarii* and *velites*, who are not obliged to these offices; this charge is not very heavy, they only being in waiting once in four days: this provision is made for the ease of the tribunes, and for supporting their authority, credit, and conveniency. The companies of the *triarii* are exempt from all the duties which the rest perform to the tribunes, but each is obliged to send every day four soldiers to the troops of horse, to watch near the companies behind them. They set a special guard on the horse, to prevent them from embarrassing each other, to see that they preserve the ranks, or, by falling foul on one another, they do not cause any disorder or alarm in the camp. To conclude, one company every day stand centry at the general's tent, to prevent any treachery and ambuscade, as well as for the grandeur of his office.

“In the last place, the allies have orders given to secure by a trench and palisado two sides of the camp, and the two remaining are secured by the Romans, each legion having one committed to its care. Now all sides thus distributed, the captains, who are present to oversee the work, take care that every thing be done by their companies, and two tribunes inspect each side in general.

“As to what relates to the Roman way of decamping and marching, it is after this manner:—At the first sounding of the trumpet the tents are taken down, and the baggage packed up; but here it must be understood the general's and tribunes' are always sent first. At the second sounding they load the horses, and on the third they must begin their march. For the most part the volunteers are in the front; then follow the right wing of the auxiliaries, with their baggage; after which marches, the first Roman legion with its baggage likewise; and lastly, the left wing of the auxiliaries, with its baggage, brings up the rear. As for the horse, they sometimes march in the rear of all, and sometimes flank the baggage, for better security of it. Whenever they have any apprehension of the enemies attacking them in their rear, they do not change their order, but only cause the volunteers to march thither forthwith; the legions and auxiliaries march thin, that they may all equally have a share in the forage and water.

“The Romans have another kind of march, when they are in any fear of the enemy, and are in an open country: they cause the *hastati*, *principii*,

The camp, how secured.

The method of decamping, as practised by the Romans.

Order of the Roman march.

cipii, and triarii, to be divided into three battalions, and to march at equal distance one from another. First, they place the ensigns and colours in the front with their baggage, then the hastati with their baggage, next the principii and their baggage, and lastly, the triarii with theirs, in a manner that, the army being thus disposed, whatever happens, either on the right or left, by a half-turn they may be upon their guard; the first thing they do is to remove the standards from that side where the enemy appears, so that in an instant, and with one motion, the army can be in a posture of defence. By these means the baggage, and all those who follow the army, will be found in the rear, and consequently secured from danger.

Who are sent to mark out the ground for an encampment.

"When the army is near the place where they are to encamp, the tribunes and captains, whom it is customary to chuse upon such an occasion, go before and mark out the ground for the prætorium, as likewise consider where it is most proper for the legions to pitch their tents. After this, they measure out the circumference of the prætorium, and then draw from thence one strait line, where are raised the tents of the tribunes, and on the other hand, where are pitched the tents of the legions. The same lines are drawn out on the other side of the prætorium, according to the description we have already given. This being done, for the laying out of the ground is no way difficult, the distances being easily known, they plant a standard, first where the prætorium is to stand, and next in the other places marked out. Here it must be observed, that the consul's standard is always white, and all the others red. Afterwards they proceed to measure out the streets, in every one of which they plant a javelin. By these means, as soon as ever the army arrives, they know immediately where to place themselves, and every one can go directly to his quarters by the standard of the general.

Difference between the Roman and Greek methods of fortification.

"In their encampments the Romans act quite contrary to the Greeks; for whenever the latter design to pitch their camp, they always chuse places well fortified by nature, and this because they would avoid the trouble of entrenching themselves; and moreover, they never trusted so much to such fortifications, as to those presented by nature. Hence it happens, that as they are obliged to have their camp conformable to the ground they have pitched upon, so also their quarters must differ according to the nature of the place, and consequently their lodging be always uncertain; but, on the other hand, the Romans cheerfully underwent all manner of fatigue and labour, that they might encamp more commodiously."

General observations on the various fortifications in Britain.

Thus far Polybius;\* and from this excellent description we not only learn the outward form of the earth-work of the camp, but we see the disposition of the army itself; which was all done in such just order, that we cannot but admire the prudence and skill of the Romans. Yet we

\* This extract from Polybius is according to the translation of that author, published by Sheer.

are not to imagine that this people constantly made their camps exactly square: the inequality of the ground which they might sometimes be obliged to pitch upon, might frequently cause various alterations; but we may depend upon it that those were as trifling as possible, and that the form of their camps were constantly as near to the square, or in case of additional force, to the long square, as it was convenient to make them. But some time after Polybius they made a slight alteration in the figure of their camp, by just rounding off the corners; and of this form are the greater part of the Roman camps discovered in England.\* Having thus seen the size and fashion of a Roman camp, we shall presently exclude all those circular entrenchments upon the tops of hills, and places of natural strength, so frequently discovered in this kingdom, from any share in the performances of the Romans. Can any idea be more natural, than that the Britons, a people who were too volatile to attend to the making regular fortifications, and places of proper defence, and flying before a strong band of veteran troops, who well understood the manœuvres of military discipline, should have recourse to places by nature strong, and difficult to be forced? And this, we find, was the constant custom with them. After the Britons, the Saxons also may claim a great share in these circular hill-entrenchments; and besides these, the Danes themselves also made choice of hills, and places by nature strong, for their temporary stations. It must be our business, in the succeeding parts, to point out, if possible, what is Saxon, and what Danish; and when this is done, we may conclude, that what does not belong to either of these people, nor to the Romans, must be British.

All this discourse has hitherto been concerning the temporary camps of the Romans; we now come to their more consequential stations, and the which we can with more certainty insist upon, namely, their walled cities. One of the most perfect of these is upon the very utmost borders of Hampshire, towards Berkshire; it was the ancient Vin-domis of that people, but in the present day it is called Silchester: this venerable antiquity has the walls now standing all around it, and its circuit, by an actual measurement, is found to be near an English mile and a half; it contains within the walls corn fields to the amount of one hundred acres; the wall on the south side, where it is most perfect, is in some

<sup>Walled towns  
of the Romans,</sup>

\* See a camp of this form, plate VI, which is at Plushey, in Essex; it is a full English mile in circumference; the valum, or bank, which surrounds it, where it is most perfect is fourteen feet high from the bottom of the ditch, which is in general about ten yards over. The figure of the camp is not far wide of the long square, with the corners gently rounded off; it stands upon the Roman road, which probably went from thence to Caesarmagus, situated either at Chelmsford, or Writtle. This, perhaps, was the *Villam Faustini*, which

better answers to the given distances in the Itinerary of Antoninus, than Dunmow, where there is not the least vestige of a Roman station. The explanation of the figures upon the plate are as follow:—A A A A, is the bank, or valum. B B B B, the fosse, or ditch. C C, the remains of a Norman castle. D D, the street through the village. E E E E, the four entrances into the entrenchment. F F F F, &c. houses that form the village. G, the parish church.

Silchester de-  
scribed.

places near twenty feet high, but its height in general runs from sixteen to eighteen feet.\*

The first foundation of the wall, which is here and there to be discovered on the north and north-east sides of the city, appears to have been made with large flag stones, from two to four feet, and four feet and a half in length, and of unequal thickness, as sometimes six, seven, eight, and nine inches; their depth could not be ascertained, because they yet remain firmly fixed in the wall. Upon these stones was laid a stratum of rubble stone, or large cragged flints, large pebbles, and the like, filled up, and held together with a strong cement; this was continued to the height of about two feet and a half, and then succeeded another layer of large flat stones, though not so big as the former; for the largest of these seldom exceeded three feet in length, and oftener were not so long; they ran in general from four to six inches in thickness;† many of these stones, which were broken out of the wall, were carefully measured, and few exceeded eighteen and twenty inches in width. This course, or layer of flat stones, runs round the whole city, and may easily be discovered in any part of the wall, and its bottom is almost always level with the ground. Upon this layer again was another stratum of the rubble stone, which, according to the measurements on the south side, was in height three feet; then succeeded another layer of smaller flat stones, made as near as possible to the shape of the Roman brick, but larger and thicker, so that the thickness of the stone, interspersed with the cement, amounted to four inches. On this layer of flat stones was raised another stratum of rubble stones, composed of smaller flints, and laid in more order than the former; this stratum was about two feet and a half in height; then followed a double row of flat stones, in shape and thickness exactly the same with those before-described; this double row took up the space of eight inches. On these again was raised another stratum of rubble stone, of the finer sort, like the former, and exactly of the same height, namely, two feet and a half; on the top of this was a repetition of the double row of flat stones, something larger and thicker than the former; for these two rows, with the mortar, made the thickness of nine inches. The stratum of rubble which was raised upon these, was three feet high; and on the top succeeded by another double row of flat stones, still increasing in size; for they took up, with the mortar, the space of ten inches; and then the rubble continues on to the top, higher or lower, as the walls have been more or less damaged:

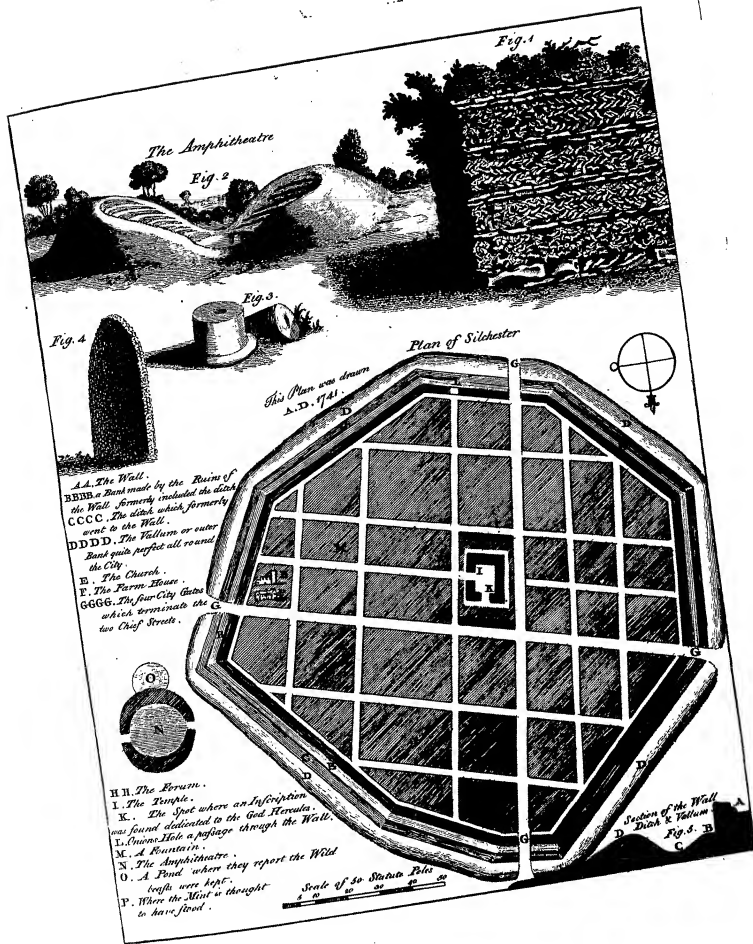
\* See a view of the south wall of this city, with the present appearance of the south gate, or entrance, plate VII.

† This second layer of large flat stones (for the first, as described before, which forms the foundation, is very seldom to be discovered, therefore we have in the

delineation begun with the second) is represented at the bottom of the piece of the wall, plate VIII. fig. 1. where all the other stratums of rubble stone, and layers of flat stones, are regularly drawn upon a larger scale than in the former plate.







yet in many places a succeeding layer of flat stones is to be seen, followed also by another stratum of rubble, of still finer cast. One thing was observable, as well in the foundation as in the second row of large stones, described as above; these great stones were not constantly continued, but there appeared frequent breaks, filled up with smaller flat stones, set shelving one upon the other; also, in the second, third, and fourth strata of rubble, (from the ground) great pains appeared to have been taken with the flints, to place them in exact order, so that for a considerable distance one often observes them to form a kind of zigzag, or herring-bone work laid in rows, some one way, and some another.

The wall at the fourth gate being measured, was found to be full four and twenty feet thick; the whole of this city was surrounded by a large deep ditch, great part of which is now filled up with the ruins of the wall, so as to form a bank, on which one may easily walk round about, having the wall itself on one side, and the ditch below on the other; but this was not its original state, for formerly the ditch came up close to the wall, and this bank was not then in being. Beyond the ditch again is the external valum, very perfect, and easy to be traced out all round the whole city; its highest parts (even in the present state) are at least fifteen feet perpendicular from the bottom of the ditch, but if it is measured on the slope, considerably more: a straight line drawn from the top of this bank to the wall on the north-east side, measured four and thirty yards, its full breadth.\* The two main streets, which lead from gate to gate, are broader than any of the rest, and measured better than ten yards across.† Near the middle of the city, within a spacious square,

Further parts of  
the city de-  
scribed.

\* See the plan of Silchester, plate VIII. and the references at the side; also figure 5, on the same plate, which is the section of the wall, the bank, the ditch, and the external valum; A, is the wall, coming perpendicularly down to B, which represents the bank made by the ruin of the wall; C, is the ditch, and D, is the external valum.

† It would be an injustice done to a very sensible and industrious man, if I were not to own, that I owe the plan of this ancient city to a Mr. Stair, of Aldermaston, in Berkshire, about four miles from Silchester; a man who has spent all his leisure time in the preserving as much as he could of this venerable antiquity, and making every discovery which lies in his power. He was at the pains to measure every part of it exactly; for when I surveyed it myself in the summer, in order to make the delineations which are here engraved, and to examine carefully into the nature of the

work, I found every part of the plan as correct as possible. From his plan the engraving is given, but reduced by a scale to bring it to the size of my own book. And as I was unwilling that Mr. Stair, who has taken such indefatigable pains to investigate a number of curious particulars relative to this place, should not in some measure be rewarded for it, I persuaded him to draw up an account of it, and give it to the world, together with a full account of the coins which he found in digging there, amongst which was a curious gold *Allectus*. Another thing I shall observe concerning the above plan, which is this: the streets which are represented were all taken by him the very summer after the hard winter in the year 1741, which proved very dry; and in the corn, the whole appearance of the streets, just as here laid down; for he was at incredible pains to trace them out exactly, because neither before nor since have they been seen so perfect; though

square, formed partly by the interfection of the two main streets, was discovered the foundation of a large structure, consisting of free-stone, three feet thick, which is reported to have been the temple, because near it, and on the inside, was found the remains of a little elevated building, an altar, as it was thought, from the quantity of ashes, wood, and coals burnt, that lay round about; it was three feet in height, four in length, and three in breadth, and built entirely of Roman bricks; the dimensions of which were as follow: seventeen inches and a half long, twelve and a half broad, and near two in thickness.\* Not far from the same place was also ploughed up, the base and other parts of a large column of free-stone, in diameter one foot eight inches, and a piece of a wall of rubble stone strongly and elegantly cemented.† The city was supplied with water from a fine plentiful spring, which arises in the south-east division, and running to the wall, discharges itself underneath into the ditch.

The amphitheatre at Silchester.

Close at the north-east corner of this venerable ruin stands the amphitheatre; the diameter of its area is fifty yards by forty; it has two entrances, one opposite the city, due west, and the other directly contrary, facing the east. The elevation of the amphitheatre consists of a mixture of clay and gravel, and the seats are in five rows, one above another. The whole wall, or bank, of the amphitheatre is about twenty yards thick at the bottom, and so decreases gradually to the breadth of about four yards at the top; and is in height on the north and south sides full thirty feet.‡ Close on the south side of the amphitheatre is a pond, where, they inform you, a cavern formerly was, in which the wild beasts were kept until the time that they were to be brought out before the spectators.§

Onion's hole, why made.

On the south side of the city there is a passage underneath the wall, which is called by the country people who inhabit there, Onion's hole;|| which, they say, had its name from a giant so called, who made his dwelling formerly in the city; and so strongly is the tradition of this

though every year the main streets may be easily discovered by the colour of the corn. Afterwards, to prove the truth of his plan, he dug down into the ground on each side of the streets, and constantly found the foundations of houses, &c. very obvious; whilst in the streets the soil seemed gravelly and uniform.

\* All these things were discovered by the Mr. Stair, above-mentioned, from whose mouth I received this account; and nearly the same was printed from a letter of Dr. Ward, to the Royal Society. See *Philos. Transf.* vol. XLV. fol. 603.

† See these pieces of the columns, fig. 3. and the bit of the wall, fig. 4, plate

VIII. The bit of the wall is perfectly flat, four feet high, two feet and a quarter wide, and near four inches thick; its composition was very fine pebbles, held together by a strong cement of a blackish hue. It was probably part of the wall of some temple, or superb house.

‡ See a perspective view of the amphitheatre from the north, plate VIII. fig. 2. the bottom is now a horse-pond, and is about three feet deep of water.

§ See the plan of the amphitheatre, plate VIII. marked N, and the pond marked O.

|| See the plan of the city, and the reference to the letter L.

stamped



stamped upon their minds, that all the Roman pennies, which are found in great abundance, bear the name of *Onion's pennies* amongst them. In all probability, this hole was neither more nor less than some private passage; for, independent of the four gates, it might be made use of upon particular occasions.

This large account we have given of *Silchester*; and those who shall have leisure enough to examine other remaining buildings of the Romans, will find them constantly upon the same plan, only where flat stones could not conveniently be got, their place was supplied with Roman brick, as was the case in the old Roman walls at *Verulam*, at *Chesterford*,\* and may also be seen at *Richborough*,† or more evident still at *Burg-castle*, in *Suffolk*.‡ One may observe that the forms of these cities were various; that at *Chesterford* was something of an oval, *Burg-castle* and *Richborough* are more inclining to the long square, not unlike the Roman castra.

And now, by way of conclusion, we will set down all the Roman towns that were in Britain, according to the *Itinerary of Antoninus*, and their distance from each other as therein described.

ITER I.				ROUT 1.			
<i>A limite, id est a vallo Prætorium usque.</i>				<i>From the limit of the wall to Hebbestow-fields, or Broughton. §</i>			
M. P. clvi.				156 Miles.			
A	Bremenio	}	M. P. xx	REICHESTER	}		20
	Corstopilum						
Vindomoram	-	M. P.	ix	Ebbeſteſter	-	-	9
Vinoviam	-	M. P.	xix	Bincheſteſter	-	-	19
Cataſactonem	..	M. P.	xxii	Cataſact	-	-	22
Iſurium	-	M. P.	xxiv	Aldbrough	-	-	24
Eboracum leg. trix	vi. vic-	-	-	York	-	-	14
Derventionem	-	M. P.	xiv				
Delgovitia	-	M. P.	vii	On Derwent river	-	-	7
Prætorium	-	M. P.	xvi	Wigton	-	-	16
		M. P.	xxv	Hubberſtow fields, or Broughton	-	-	25

\* The account of *Chesterford*, and the old wall of *London*, ſee the firſt volume of the *Hopda Angel cýnnan*, or the *Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants of England*, page 15.

† Vide *Stukeley's Itin. Curioſ.*

‡ See *Ives's Remarks upon the Gariannonum of the Romans*.

§ The reader is deſired to notice, that all theſe places, as given in the *Engliſh explanation*, are from the moſt approved antiquaries, as *Camden*, *Horsley*, *Gale*, &c. and from them the map, plate IX. which is given in this volume, is made.

## ITER II.

*A Vallo ad Portum Ritupas.*

## ROUT 2.

*From beyond the Wall to Richborough  
in Kent.*

M. P. cccclxxxi.

481 Miles.

MILES.

			From Middleby		
A Blatobulgio			To Netberby	—	12
Castra exploratorum	M. P.	xii	Carlisle	—	12
Luguvallum	M. P.	xii	Old Penrith	—	14
Voredam	M. P.	xiv	Kirbyshire	—	13
Brouonacim	M. P.	xiii	Brugh under Stanmore	—	13
Verterim	M. P.	xiii	Bowes	—	14
Lavatrim	M. P.	xiv	Cataraft	—	13
Cataractonem	M. P.	xiii	Aldborough	—	24
Ifurium	M. P.	xxiv	York	—	17
Eboracum	M. P.	xvii	Tadcaster	—	9
Calcariam	M. P.	ix	Near Grestland	—	20
Camhodunum	M. P.	xx	Manchester	—	18
Mancunium	M. P.	xviii	Near Northwich	—	18
Condate	M. P.	xviii	Chester	—	20
Devam leg. xx victrix	M. P.	xx	Near Stretton	—	10
Bovium	M. P.	x	Near Draiton	—	20
Mediolanum	M. P.	xx	Near Wem	—	12
Rutunium	M. P.	xii	Wroxeter	—	11
Viroconium	M. P.	xi	Near Sheriff Hales	—	11
Uxaconam	M. P.	xi	Near the river Pink	—	12
Pennocrucium	M. P.	xii	Wall near Litchfield	—	12
Etocetum	M. P.	xii	Mancafter	—	6
Mandueffedum	M. P.	vi	Cleycester	—	12
Venonium	M. P.	xii	Ruther at Weedon, near Daventry	—	17
Bennavenam	M. P.	xvii	Towcester	—	12
Lacodorum	M. P.	xii	Fenny Stratford	—	17
Magiovinum	M. P.	xvii	Dunstable	—	12
Durocobrivim	M. P.	xii	St. Albans	—	12
Verolanium	M. P.	xii	Brockly Hills	—	9
Sulloniacim	M. P.	ix	London	—	12
Londinium	M. P.	xii	Woodcote near Croydon	—	10
Noviomagum	M. P.	x	North Fleet	—	18
Vagniacim	M. P.	xviii	Rocheester	—	9
Durobrivim	M. P.	ix	Milton	—	13
Durolevum	M. P.	xiii	Canterbury	—	12
Durovernum	M. P.	xii	To Richborough	—	12
Ad Portum Ritupas	M. P.	xii			

ITER

## ITER III.

*A Londinio ad Portum Dubris.*

M. P. lxxvi.

## ROUT 3.

*From London to the Haven at Dover.*

66 Miles. MILES.

Durobrivum	M. P. xxvii	Rochester	—	27
Durovernum	M. P. xxv	Canterbury	—	25
Ad Portum Dubris	M. P. xiv	Dover	—	14

## ITER IV.

*A Londinio ad Portum Limanis.*

M. P. lxxviii.

## ROUT 4.

*From London to the Haven at Lime.*

68 Miles.

Durobrivum	M. P. xxvii	Rochester	—	27
Durovernum	M. P. xxv	Canterbury	—	25
Ad Portum Lemanis	M. P. xvi	Lime near Westbyth	—	16

## ITER V.

*A Londinio Luguwallum ad Vallum.*

M. P. ccccxliii.

## ROUT 5.

*From London to Carlisle near the Wall.*

443 Miles.

Cæsaromagus	M. P. xxviii	Near Writtle	—	28
Coloniæ	M. P. xxiv	Colchester	—	24
Villam Faustini	M. P. xxxv	Dunmow, or rather Plufsey	—	35
Icianos	M. P. xviii	Chesterford	—	18
Camboricum	M. P. xxxv	Icklingham	—	35
Duroli Pontem	M. P. xxv	Cambridge	—	25
Durobrivas	M. P. xxxv	Caistor	—	35
Caufennim	M. P. xxx	Ancaster	—	30
Lindum	M. P. xxvi	Lincoln	—	26
Segelocim	M. P. xiv	Littleborough	—	14
Danum	M. P. xxi	Doncaster	—	21
Legeolium	M. P. xvi	Caisterford	—	16
Eboracum	M. P. xxi	York	—	21
Ifubrigantum	M. P. xvii	Aldborough	—	17
Catarahtonem	M. P. xxiv	Cataraft	—	24
Lavatrim	M. P. xvii	Bowes	—	17
Verterim	M. P. xiii	Brugh	—	13
Broccavum	M. P. xx	Brougham Castle	—	20
Luguwallum	M. P. xxii	Carlisle	—	22

## ITER VI.

*A Londinio Lindum.*

M. P. clvi.

## ROUT 6.

*From London to Lincoln.*

156 Miles.

Verolamum	M. P. xxi	St. Albans	—	21
Durocobrium	M. P. xii	Dunstable	—	12
Magiovinum	M. P. xii	Fenny Stratford	—	12
Lactodorum	M. P. xvi	Towcester	—	16
Ifannavatia	M. P. xii	Near Daventry	—	12
VOL. I.	R	r		Tri-

				MILES.
Tripontium	M. P.	xii	Rugby	12
Vennonim	M. P.	ix	Cleycester	9
Ratis	M. P.	xii	Leicester	12
Verometum	M. P.	xiii	Near Willoughby	13
Margidunum	M. P.	xiii	Near East Bridgeford	13
Ad Pontem	M. P.	vii	Near Southwell	7
Crococalanum	M. P.	vii	Brugh near Colingbam	7
Lindum	M. P.	xii	Lincoln	12

## ITER VII.

*A Regno Londinium.*

M. P. xcvi.

## ROUT 7.

*From Cbichester to London.*

96 Miles.

Claufentum	M. P.	xx	Old Southampton	20
Ventam Belgarum	M. P.	x	Winchester	10
Callevam Atrebatum	M. P.	xxii	Farnham	22
Pontes	M. P.	xxii	Near Old Windfor	22
Londinium	M. P.	xxii	London	22

## ITER VIII.

*Ab Eboraco Londinium.*

M. P. ccxxvii.

## ROUT 8.

*From York to London.*

227 Miles.

Lagecium	M. P.	xxi	Castle Ford	21
Danum	M. P.	xvi	Doncaster	16
Angelocum	M. P.	xxi	Littleborough	21
Lindum	M. P.	xiv	Lincoln	14
Crococalanum	M. P.	xiv	Brugh near Colingbam	14
Margidunum	M. P.	xiv	Near East Bridgeford	14
Vernemetum	M. P.	xii	Near Willoughby	12
Ratis	M. P.	xii	Leicester	12
Venno			Cleycester	
Banavanto			Near Daventry	
Magiovinium	M. P.	xxviii	Fenny Stratford	28
Durocobrivim	M. P.	xii	Dunstable	12
Verolanum	M. P.	xx	St. Albans	20
Londinium	M. P.	xxi	London	21

## ITER IX.

*A Venta Icenorum Londinium.*

M. P. cxxxviii

## ROUT 9.

*Caister near Norwich to London.*

138 Miles.

Sitomagum	M. P.	xxxii	Wulpit	32
Cambronium	M. P.	xxii	Stretford	22
Adanfam	M. P.	xv	Witbam, or Coggeshall	15
Camulodunum	M. P.	vi	Maldon	6
Canonium	M. P.	ix	Farmbridge	9
Cæsaromagum	M. P.	xii	Writtle	12

Duro-



Durolitum	M. P.	xvi	<i>Leſton</i>	—	MILES. 16
Londinium	M. P.	xv	<i>London</i>	—	15

## ITER X.

## ROUT 10.

*A Clano venta Mediolanum.*  
*From Lancheſter in the County of Dur-*  
*bam, to the Station near Draiton,*  
*upon the borders of Shropſhire.*

	M. P.	cl.		150 Miles.	
Galavam	-	M. P.	xviii	<i>Old Town</i>	18
Alonem	-	M. P.	xii	<i>Whitley Caſtle</i>	12
Galacum	-	M. P.	xix	<i>Appleby</i>	19
Bremertonacim	-	M. P.	xxvii	<i>Overborough</i>	27
Coccium	-	M. P.	xx	<i>Ribcheſter</i>	20
Mancunium	-	M. P.	xvii	<i>Mancheſter</i>	17
Condate	-	M. P.	xviii	<i>Near Northwich</i>	18
Mediolanum	-	M. P.	xviii	<i>Near Drayton</i>	18

## ITER XI.

## ROUT 11.

*A Segoncio Devam.*

*From Caernarvon to Cheſter.*

	M. P.	lxxiv.		74 Miles.	
Cononium	-	M. P.	xxiv	<i>Caer Rbyn</i>	24
Varim	-	M. P.	xix	<i>Bodvary</i>	19
Devam	-	M. P.	xxxii	<i>Cheſter</i>	32

## ITER XII.

## ROUT 12.

*A Calleva Ifcadum Nuniorum.*

*From Farnham to Chifelborough.*

	M. P.	cxxxvi.		136 Miles.	
Vindomim	-	M. P.	xv	<i>Silcheſter</i>	15
Ventam Belgarum	-	M. P.	xxi	<i>Wincheſter</i>	21
Brige	-	M. P.	xi	<i>Broughton</i>	11
Sorinodunim	-	M. P.	viii	<i>Old Sarum</i>	8
Vindocladiam	-	M. P.	xii	<i>Near Cranburn</i>	12
Duronovarium	-	M. P.	viii	<i>Dorcheſter</i>	8
Moridunum	-	M. P.	xxxvi	<i>Near Eggerton</i>	36
Ifcadum	-	M. P.	xv	<i>At or near Chifelborough</i>	15

## ITER XIII.

## ROUT 13.

*A Muridono Viroconium.*

*From Eggerton to Wroxeter.*

	M. P.	clxxxvi.		186 Miles.	
Leucarum	-	M. P.	xv	<i>Near Glaſtenbury</i>	15
Bomium	-	M. P.	xv	<i>Near Axbridge</i>	15
Nidum	-	M. P.	xv	<i>Near Portbury</i>	15
Ifcam. Leg. 18 Aug.	-	M. P.	xxvii	<i>Caer Leon</i>	27
Burrium	-	M. P.	ix	<i>Uſk</i>	9
Gobannium	-	M. P.	xii	<i>Abergavenny</i>	12
		R	12		Magnim

				MILES.
Magnim	-	M. P. xxii	<i>Kenchester</i>	— 22
Branonium		M. P. xxiv	<i>Ludlow</i>	— 24
Viroconium		M. P. xxvii	<i>Wroxeter</i>	— 27

## ITER XIV.

*Ab Ifca Callevam.*

M. P. cix.

## ROUT 14.

*From Caer Leon to Farnbam.*

109 Miles.

Burrium	-	M. P. ix	<i>Urk</i>	— 9
Bleffium	-	M. P. xi	<i>Monmouth</i>	— 11
Ariconium		M. P. x	<i>Near Ross</i>	— 11
Clevum	-	M. P. xv	<i>Gloucester</i>	— 15
Durocornovium		M. P. xiv	<i>Cirencester</i>	— 14
Spinas	-	M. P. xv	<i>Speen</i>	— 15
Callevam	-	M. P. xv	<i>Farnbam</i>	— 15

## ITER XV.

*Alto Itinere ab Ifca Callevam.*

M. P. ciii.

## ROUT 15.

*From Caer Leon to Farnbam another way. 103 Miles.*

Ventam Silurum		M. P. ix	<i>Caerwent</i>	— 9
Abonem	-	M. P. ix	<i>Aunbury</i>	— 9
Trajectum		M. P. ix	<i>Henbam</i>	— 9
Aquas Solis	-	M. P. vi	<i>Bath</i>	— 6
Verlucionem		M. P. xv	<i>Near Leckbam</i>	— 15
Cunetionem		M. P. xx	<i>Marlborough</i>	— 20
Spinas	-	M. P. xv	<i>Speen</i>	— 15
Callevam	-	M. P. xv	<i>Farnbam</i>	— 15

The reader is wished to observe, that the Roman mile is shorter than the English mile, being nearly as 11 to 12.

END OF THE FOURTH PART OF THE CHRONICLE.

C H R O.

## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T V.

A DISSERTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT, LAWS, ARTS, MANNERS,  
HABITS, ETC. OF THE SAXONS, FROM THEIR ANCIENT STATE  
TO THE ACCESSION OF EGBERT, A. D. 804.

## C H A P. I.

*The Government, Constitution, and Laws of the ancient Germans.*

WE are now beginning the history of a very different people from the Britons, of whom we have so largely spoken; a people, to whom the English may, in the justest sense, be said to owe their origin: for this cause, it is highly necessary for us to view them in their most ancient state, and so follow them, step by step, through all their various improvements.

The English descended from the German.

Germany anciently was divided into many distinct and separate states, or nations, which were entirely independent of each other, all equally free, and subject to no laws but their own; these nations again were subdivided into a certain number of provinces, or pagi.\*

Germany, how divided anciently.

Every one of these provinces, or districts, formed a sort of civil community within itself, having its own court of judicature, and its own prince, president, or judge; and as many of these provinces as formed a whole state, or nation, (though in a manner independent of each other)

Division of provinces.

\* "Suevi centum pagos habere dicunt." "Helvetia in quatuor pagos divisa est." *Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. iv. cap. 1.* "Civitas *Ibid. lib. i. cap. 12:*

were

were all of them subordinate to the supreme legislative power, vested in the general assembly, or congregation of the whole state.\*

Patriarchal government which every man possessed.

Every freeman exercised a patriarchal authority in his own house, and all his family was subject to him, and dependent on him alone; his authority was absolute over his slaves and vassals, so that if he should kill them in his anger, it was a matter that concerned not the community in general, neither was there any law to call him to an account for his rash proceedings. Again, if his wife dishonoured his bed, he might inflict a punishment upon her of his own accord, without waiting for any previous trial, or formal condemnation: and to the honour of our ancient ancestors, it may be affirmed, they seldom abused this extensive power, but, on the contrary, behaved with much lenity towards their dependants.†

The prince, why elected, and how.

This was the domestic government of the Germans; but something further was still necessary to be concluded upon for the preservation of the general peace; for when any of the heads of clans, or families, might raise disputes amongst themselves, it was but equitable that there should be some judge constituted, to decide the quarrel; for if there were none to determine such matters, they would be productive of continual feuds, and the foundation of lasting and dangerous animosities. They were soon aware of this evil, and to prevent it, by common consent of the people, a prince, or president, was elected in every pagus, or province, to whom was given full power to go round the district committed to his charge, and to hear and determine all causes, or matters of controversies, arising within his jurisdiction.‡

The extent of the prince's power.

The prince was chosen for the nobleness of his birth, and the power conferred upon him by the consent of the people, which, however, was limited by certain restrictions; nor could he do any thing contrary to the constitution of the country, but was controuled by the general councils, in which he was first elected, and where he received his authority. His office continued for life, and his children succeeded him, though very young, if the distinguished merit of their father entitled them to that dignity.§

Attendants upon the prince.

To support the dignity of the prince, and to assist him in the execution of his legislative power, a select band, to the amount of one hundred, were chosen from amongst the people, who were always such as had the reputation of being the wisest and most judicious in the pro-

\* Vide Squire's English Constitution, page 16.

† Tacit. de Morib. German.

‡ Ibid. & Cæs. Bel. Gal. lib. vi. This prince, or judge, was probably called by the Germans, *Forsyte*, or first; that is

chief, or head; but by the Roman authors, sometimes king, general, but most often prince: "Eliguntur in iisdem conciliis principes, qui iura per pagos vicisque reddunt." Tacit. de Morib. Germ. § Ibid.

vince; besides these, he was constantly followed by a numerous train of the bravest freemen of the country; these were an honorary set of servants, or companions,\* who not only added to his state and dignity, but in the time of battle were his safeguard; for they were all of them by oath obliged to be faithful to him, and to defend his life at the hazard of their own: and so far would they frequently carry their enthusiastic love for their prince, as to impute to him the glory of their own actions, however great and meritorious; and all the return that the prince made them for these services, was, the entertaining them plentifully at his expence, and sometimes rewarding them, according to their deserts, with a war horse, or a lance, a weapon they most affected; and these companions, or followers, were of different ranks, which kept up a constant spirit of emulation amongst them, every one striving to obtain as high a place as he could in his prince's favour. The number of these followers was not limited, they seem to have served of their own accord, so that by the number of them that attended upon the person of a prince, you might know how much he was beloved by the people; and the prince was not a little desirous of having a numerous and valiant train of attendants; for his dignity was thereby increased, and by the same means he not only acquired great fame in his own nation, but became respectable to the neighbouring states; so that his friendship was sought after by embassies, and cultivated by presents.†

Besides the administration of justice, an authority was vested in the prince, to divide, or portion out land amongst the several families within his territories, and place them wherever he might think proper. The freemen remained but a year in one place, for when that time was completed, the princes obliged them to go to another part, where a new habitation was assigned to them; and this was done lest they should give their minds to agriculture, and so neglect the use of their arms, and also to prevent any one clan from growing richer than their neighbours, lest they should assume too great an authority in the state, where all freemen were esteemed equal.‡ When the prince went to war against the enemies of the province, it was a matter of the highest disgrace for any freeman, through fear, or any other cause, to neglect attending upon him.§

Another prerogative, which the prince had above the commons, was, his being allowed two wives; but this was not for the gratification of his lusts, but for the obtaining of issue: for, of all the barbarous nations whose histories are handed down to the present time, there is no people who were more famous for their exemplary chastity than the Germans.||

\* They are styled *Comites* by Tacitus:

† Tacit. de Morib. German.

‡ Cæs. Comment. Bel. Gal. l. vi. c. 20.

§ Ibid.

|| Tacit. de Morib. German.

The authority  
of the prince to  
divide lands.

Princes allowed  
two wives, and  
why.

The revenue of  
the prince.

The expences of the prince were supported by several means; first, a larger portion of land was allotted to him in the general division of the province, than to any of the other freemen; next, a certain portion of the cattle, or grain, the produce of the land of every freeman, was presented to him; again, every offender whose crime was fineable, whatever the payment might be, a part of it belonged to him; so that his annual revenue must have been very considerable, yet he was never rich, for the more bountiful his supporters were, the more liberal he was in his rewards to his followers.\*

The great council  
of the state.

We now come to the greatest part of the constitution of the state, their general assemblies; these were a full meeting of all the pagi, or provinces, which formed a distinct nation, or state; not only all the princes in such a nation had a right to be there, but every freeman who was arrived at a proper age, and had not forfeited his title by any misdemeanor, was also bound to be present, to give his assent, or declare his dislike, to the business there transacted. In these councils all the material affairs of the whole community was dispatched; here complaints might be lodged against the princes of the provinces, and every man was sure to have his cause righted; here also public edicts were made, princes chosen to preside over provinces, generals elected, and war declared against any other state; nay, even a young man was not permitted to bear arms until he had been first approved of in these councils, where he was solemnly presented with a shield and a lance, and these were the first badges of honour conferred upon him before he became a member of the state, and was permitted to fight for his country. Small trifling matters the princes themselves concluded upon; but all weighty affairs were first debated in council amongst the princes, and after declared to the people, in whom was invested the sole power of confirming, or abrogating the decrees of the council, and the causing them to be obeyed: but when the people had given their consent, such determinations were held sacred, and might not be disannulled, unless in another general council, and by a fresh consent of the people.†

Rules observed  
in the councils.

They all of them came armed to their councils, and being seated each in his proper place, the priest, who had the authority to punish such as offended, commanded silence, and the princes speak first, and after

\* Tacit. Morib. de Germ.

† Ibid. Who sees not in these grand national councils the most perfect groundwork of the present parliament? It may seem unaccountable, yet true it is, many of the moderns have strangely perplexed themselves about the antiquity and origin of the parliament: some have attributed the honour of this noble institution to Edward the Confessor; others again to Henry the First. Ought they not to have

gone still higher, and they would have found them not only the grand and most material part of the Saxon constitution, but even of the German themselves, and that in their most wild and uncultivated state? And this matter will appear more obvious and striking, as in the succeeding parts of this work we shall regularly point out the nature and improvements of these councils amongst the Saxons and the Normans.

them every man according to his age, nobility, renown in war, or power of eloquence; at the same time declaring their sentiments in a soft persuasive manner, and not haughtily, as if commanding the auditors. If the opinion which was delivered to the freemen was not pleasing to them, they expressed their dislike by a murmuring sound of discontent; if, on the contrary, it was well received, they clasped their lances; for it was esteemed amongst them the most honourable way of shewing their assent, or of conferring praise, when it was done by their arms.\*

When any war or danger threatened the state, they elected a general in this assembly, who was to preside over all the different provinces that composed the whole nation; and this general was always a man who, for his approved valour and conduct, had rendered himself most famous; for it was not so much his office to command the army, as by his own personal bravery and courage to set them a worthy example. After the war was concluded, the power which had been vested in the general ceased, and he descended again to the rank from whence he arose.†

There can be no reason to suppose that the Saxons altered the form of government and constitution of their ancestors upon their first gaining possessions in Britain, or, indeed, for a long time after. The followers of Hengist, and the other Saxon chiefs, were all of them equal with their leaders, and volunteers, owing only a temporary obedience to them as their generals, and not like mercenary troops, to be paid or rewarded as their chiefs might chuse; so that no one person could lay claim to the whole of the conquered land, but every free soldier had an equal right to expect his share: the land, therefore, was divided by their generals, and their assistants, into as many shares as each general had corps of different districts in his army; and every one of these shares were subdivided, and every individual had his proper portion allotted to him. Thus the first division naturally constitutes so many pagi, or counties, whilst the subdivision makes trythings, hundreds, and tythings, as portioned amongst one thousand, one hundred, or ten men in a troop, all of them under their proper elder-men.‡

At this period, little difference could be made between their civil and military government; the same prince that led them to the field of battle, took care to preserve peace and good order amongst them; nor was this so very difficult, for every separate clan was composed of friends and near relations, and held so strongly by the dearest ties of consanguinity, that harmony and good fellowship was naturally preserved amongst them.

The Saxons, for a long time after their first arrival in Britain, found too much employment in the war to attend to the cultivation of the land, admitting they had been ever so desirous of doing it;§ they were obliged to use their utmost endeavours to support their conquests, and preserve

Generals, when elected, and why.

The Saxons on their arrival made no sudden alterations in their ancient constitution.

Civil and military government the same.

How the land was divided for cultivation.

\* Tacit. de Morib. German.

† Ibid.

‡ Vide Squire's Essay on the English Constitution.

§ See the second part of the Chronicle.

their property; therefore, every freeman amongst them parcelled out his share of the land, which had been allotted to him by the general, amongst his slaves and dependants for a certain time, according to his pleasure, which was to be improved and cultivated by these slaves, the lord reserving to himself such a share of the produce of their labours as he thought proper to demand; and this gave occasion to the well-known division of lands, called afterwards Bocland and Folcland.\*

The thread of  
the discourse  
broke off, and  
why.

But to proceed further in the dissertation upon this head, we shall be naturally led on by a clue of circumstances, not only through the history of the heptarchy, but even through the whole Anglo-Saxon æra; or else we must break off the discourse abruptly at the end of the heptarchy, where we shall find the whole constitution, both before and after, so closely connected, that in the next volume we shall not be able to resume the subject without tedious repetitions; to avoid which, it is proposed for the present to let it rest here, and in the succeeding dissertation to continue it regularly down, from the first arrival of the Saxons to the Norman invasion, in a clear and connected discourse, without any interruptions.

Laws of the an-  
cient Germans.

With regard to the laws of the ancient Germans, we are to consider them as made both by and for a free people, who were all of them equals; or at least no one could assume any more authority over the rest than what they themselves thought proper to invest him with, for their own mutual preservation and safety. For this cause, none could beat or imprison a freeman, except the priests, because it was not to be done as a thing insisted upon by the prince, or for an offence to his peers, but as the command of the gods, whose orders the offender had disobeyed. This mode of punishment, it seems, was chiefly confined to those who were refractory in the army; and for this purpose, as well as to sacrifice, the priests attended upon the camp, so that when one had broken any stated rule, he fell under disgrace; and every one so offending submitted voluntarily to the chastisement, and stood still to receive the repeated strokes of the lash from the hands of the priests, when, at the same time, he would have resisted even to death a blow from any other person, however exalted in their condition.†

Punishments,  
what they were.

No man could be punished by the secular power until he had forfeited his right and title to a freeman, by some base and ignominious action, and then he was sentenced severely, according to his fault. Traitors and fugitives they hanged. Cowards, and such as were unnaturally lewd, they drowned in mud, or in the marshes, and covered them with hurdles, because they would hide them from the face of men, that their crimes might be no more remembered amongst them.‡

\* Squire, ut sup.

† Ibid.

‡ Tacit. de Morib. German.



Whoever lost his shield in battle, which was given him as the insignia, or honourable badge of his profession, and proof of his worthiness to bear arms, fell into a lasting disgrace; as also did all such as escaped from the field of battle wherein their prince was slain; these were turned from society, and debarred being present at the public sacrifices, which was so shameful and black a stain upon their characters, that they seldom long out-lived it, but in some desperate manner put an end to their wretched beings.\*

Other faults of less magnitude were punished by a fine, part of which went towards the maintenance of the prince, and part, by way of reparation, was paid to the injured party. When disputes arose amongst the freemen, and their friends could not terminate the difference, the prince interposed his authority, and obliged the offended person to accept of some gift from the offender, and so the quarrel was ended; for the gift was held as a compensation for the injury, and was, as it were, a mark of submission in the aggressor, and gratified the pride of him who had been injured; by this prudent method, the foundation for lasting animosities was fairly removed. Amongst the separate clans, or families, seldom happened disputes attended by any fatal consequences; their natural love to each other held them together, as well as the strongest ties of consanguinity; for they were all relations under the government of their own elder-man, or chief, and it was esteemed a most atrocious crime for any one to injure, or slay his relation, and was, without doubt, most grievously punished.†

The matrimonial law amongst them was strictly kept; by it one woman was confined to one husband, nor might she upon his decease marry a second time; on the other hand, the husband might not have more than one wife at once, (unless he were a prince, to whom it was allowed to have two, for the sake of issue:‡) yet it does not appear that, upon the death of the first wife, a man was forbid to marry a second, but the contrary may most reasonably be supposed, especially in default of issue.

Their laws against the violators of chastity were very severe, and such were usually hanged; but it lay in the breast of the husband to punish his wife if she was guilty of incontinence, which was usually done by cutting off her hair, and then turning her naked from his house, in the presence of all her friends and relations, at the same time scourging her sharply through the town: nor was her wealth, her beauty, or her rank, in the least regarded; for after such an offence a lasting disgrace was fixed upon her, and none would speak to her, or condole with her; neither was it possible for her to get another husband, but in general wandering from place to place, she died with want, shame, and grief.§

\* Tacit. de Morib. German.  
† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.  
§ Ibid.

Laws of the  
Saxons why not  
continued here.

Such is the sketch of the legislature of the ancestors of the Anglo Saxons; it now remains to give a view of their laws, on their establishment in Britain, to the end of the Heptarchy; but the reason which has above been given, for referring the account of the government and constitution of the Anglo Saxons to the next volume, may with equal justice be applied to the laws, which are hung together as it were in a chain; and the circumstances during the Heptarchy, so connected with those that follow, that to divide the account, would not only be a difficult task, but would take off greatly from the regularity of the method, in which it is best to pursue it; therefore, both these heads will be fully and regularly treated on in the succeeding volume.

## C H A P. II.

### *The State of Architecture amongst the ancient Germans, and the Saxons.*

The ancient  
Germans under-  
stood not the art  
of building.

**A**MONGST a people so barbarous, as we find the ancient Germans, in their original state, and who attended so little to the luxuries of life, we shall not be amazed to find their dwellings homely, and uncomfortable: the pinching cold of winter, soon obliged them to seek for some shelter, where they might live secured from the storms and inclemency of the weather. Their habitations were soon found, consisting only of holes and caverns made in the earth, and covered over with dung to keep them warmer, and in these wretched dwellings they usually spent the winter. These caverns served besides for granaries, where they laid up their corn, and to them they usually made their retreat when pursued by the enemy.\*

The summer  
habitation of  
the Germans  
how constructed

In the summer, they were not confined in these dismal situations, but issuing from them, they set about the building of little huts, which were esteemed more convenient and more pleasant; these they erected in a rude manner, with timber unhewn, and framed without the least attention paid to its beauty or regularity: the walls were composed of a clear shining earth, of various colours; and all the ambition of the builder was, to dispose his colours into certain forms, so as to give the barbarous tracings of pictures.† These houses, like those of the Britons, are thought to have been of a circular form, thatched over at top with reeds and straw, and the roof left rising up in the middle.‡ One great reason why they did not bestow more pains or labour upon

\* Tacit. Vit. Agric.

† Ibid,

‡ Culver's Hist. Anc. Germ.

their

their dwellings, was, that every year they were removed from the spot of ground where they had last inhabited, and consequently left their houses behind; so that they were obliged to provide themselves with others in the places whither they went. This consideration, added to their dislike of menial labour, very naturally accounts for the rudeness of their habitations.\*

Without doubt, near to the place where the prince made his residence, houses must have been erected for him, and for his train; this would naturally constitute a town; but they had no idea of making the houses close to each other, so as to form regular streets and passages, but every man's house stood separate, and detached from that of his neighbour; all of them following their own wills, and settling themselves in whatever part of their land they most approved of.†

Towns how  
built by the  
Germans.

Temples to their gods the Germans built not at this early period, but instead thereof, they consecrated woods and groves, where they performed their religious offices. Nor can we suppose that the habitation of their prince, was more splendid than their own; the only difference was, its being larger, that he might the better entertain his friends and followers. This was the state of architecture amongst them towards the latter end of the first century; but many changes may be supposed to have taken place, and many improvements introduced before the arrival of our Saxon ancestors in Britain, which happened not until full three hundred and fifty years after; and this we may very naturally be led to conclude, because soon after, we find them erecting strong and permanent buildings of stone, as well as large castles for their security and defence.

Architecture  
improved before  
the arrival of  
the Saxons in  
Britain.

The first buildings that we find mentioned of the Saxons, are their castles; one of which Hengist is said to have erected soon after his arrival in Britain; this castle was built at Tong in Kent, and the earthworks yet remain near Tong-Mill, about half a mile from Bapchild in that county.‡ It consists of a round flat hill, surrounded by a broad ditch, and an external vallum or bank; the hill which antiently was level, has, from time to time, been removed, and thrown into the ditch, on the eastern side, where the external vallum is entirely worn away, and the rivulet, which formerly filled the ditch, has now altered its course, and running lower down by the side, it supplies a little mill, hard by, with water. The foundation of the hill, was originally made of very permanent materials, which are discovered on the south side, where part of it has been suddenly stubbed down; these are large flints, pebbles, and rough stones, thrown together, and a strong cement poured over them; and to this solid foundation we doubtless owe its present

Tong castle in  
Kent described.

\* Tacit. ut sup.

† Tacitus assigns two reasons for this singularity amongst the Germans; the first, their ignorance in the arts of build-

ing, and secondly, their fear of fire. Tac. ut sup.

‡ See Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, in Tong.

existence: the height of the hill, from the bottom of the ditch, in the most perfect part, is at the present time, near thirty feet; and on the lowest side, where it has been stubbed away, about twenty: its present diameter, is not more than one hundred yards at the top, from whence it does not go suddenly perpendicular to the bottom of the ditch, but gradually with a slope. The ditch, if measured by a straight line drawn from the top of the vallum, to the same height on the side slope of the hill, would be at least fifty yards; the external vallum, on the west, where it is most perfect, it is in some places full sixteen feet high.\*

Antiquity of  
Tong Castle.

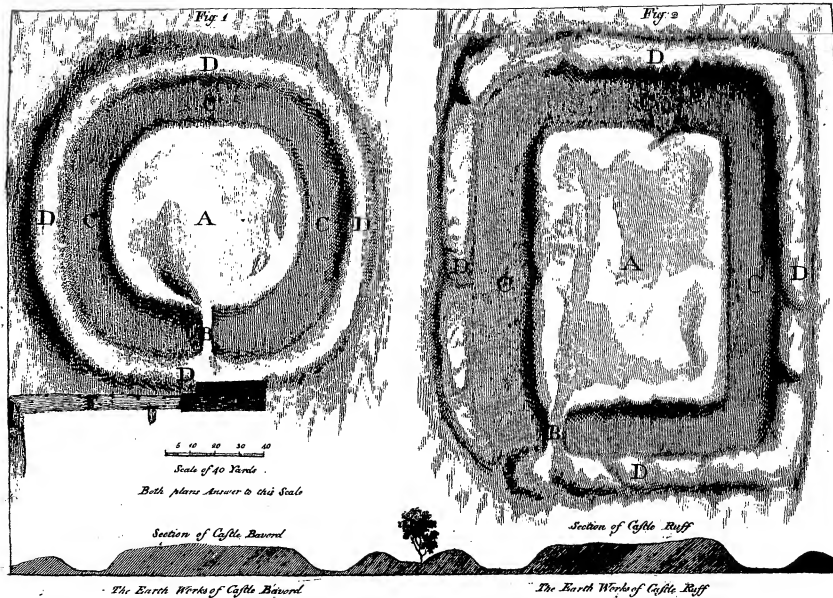
This (wherever they learned it) was the constant form in which the Saxons made the first foundation of their castles; and they were usually erected upon the brow of a hill, or upon a place which was, in some measure, fortified by nature; not that they spared any trouble or expence to make their works as strong as possible, as is clearly proved in the fortification now before us; for if such extraordinary pains were taken in the foundation itself, we may most reasonably suppose that the walls and superstructure were not neglected: and that we may with the greater degree of certainty, judge what really were the works of this people only, we have chosen the most ancient piece of work attributed to them; for if it was not really built by Hengist himself, there can be little doubt, but that it was the work of his son Æsc, who was a peaceable prince, and rather anxious to preserve the conquests already obtained, than to extend them further: during the wars which afterwards ensued, it seems to have suffered, because Octa, the son of Æsc, upon his advancement to the throne of Kent, repaired the walls, and placed a strong garrison of soldiers within it, to guard the adjacent country.

Considerations  
deduced from  
the view of  
Tong Castle.

Now, on a thorough consideration of what has been advanced, we shall easily be lead to conclude, that the Germans had made great improvements in architecture, before the period in which they first sent troops to Britain; for when we recollect how little leisure the Saxons had, for a considerable time after their arrival, to invent and perfect such buildings as we find from record erected by them, we must apprehend their necessity of having some models to form their plan upon; if so, where did they meet with them? Not from the Romans, for they had no ideas of any fortifications like these; nor from the Britons, who

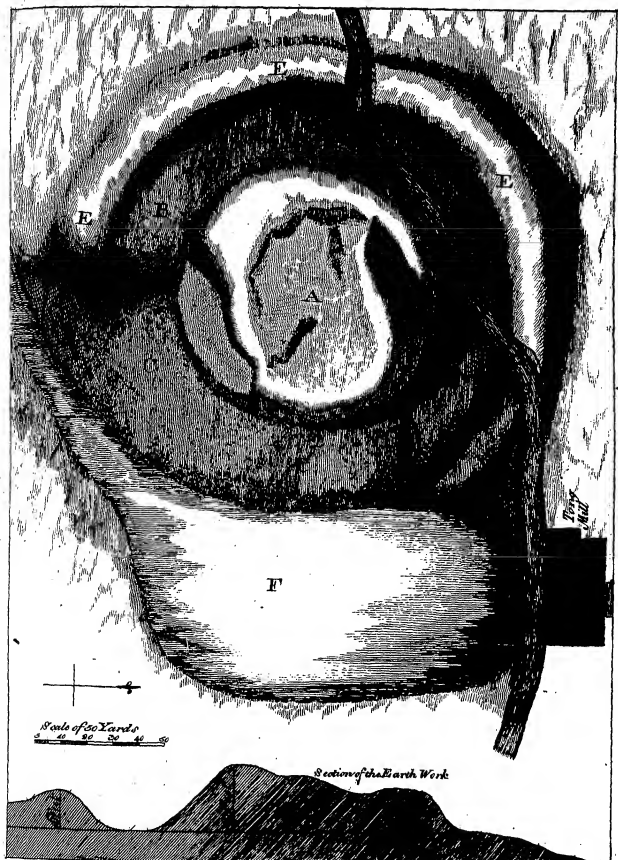
\* Two plates of this extraordinary fortification are subjoined, one representing the fourth view, in perspective, of the earth-works, removing only some few trees which grow upon the top of the hill. Vide plate XII. The other, plate XIII. is the plan or ground plot of the same, with a given scale to ascertain its exact size: A, is the castle hill, surrounded by a broad ditch; BBB, which has been stubbed down, and all the external vallum remov-

ed at CC, and runs sloping down into the water; DDD, represents a small road through part of the entrenchment to the mill, and leads to Sittenbourne; EEE, represents the external vallum, very perfect on the north and west sides; F, is the rivulet, which formerly supplied the ditch with water, but now runs much lower to the mill. At the bottom of the plate, is the section of the earth-work with the measurements.









Plan of Tong Castle.



had but lately been taught by the Romans, and followed their customs : but is it not most probable, that they brought the plan from their own country, upon which they afterwards proceeded ?

Now we come to the examination of the earth-works, which yet remain, of the temporary camps of the Saxons ; and we find they differed essentially from those of the Romans, in form and in magnitude. The most ancient Saxon camp which we can trace out by certain record, is that made by Elfred the Great, about the year 892, where he and his army lay, in order to prevent the disturbance of Hasting the Dane, who had made a strong entrenchment, near the town of Milton, in Kent ; from whence he and his forces, sorely annoyed the country round about them. The camp of Elfred is very small, consisting of a hill, a little elevated, in the form of an irregular oval ; its largest diameter is but little more than eighty yards, and its shortest about seventy ; this hill is surrounded by a broad ditch, now mostly filled up, about twenty yards over, and on the outside, is the evident appearance of the vallum.\* The camp of Hasting differs in the form and size from this of Elfred ; the hill is a long square, with the corners a little rounded off ; its length is full one hundred yards, and its breadth about eighty ; this is also surrounded with a ditch, about three and twenty yards over, and defended like the former by an external vallum. The camp of Elfred cannot be said to bear the least resemblance to the entrenchments of the Romans, even if it was as large, for these two plain reasons : first, the inside of the camp itself is raised above the common level of the adjoining country ; and secondly, the ditch is of such a disproportionate width : these circumstances alone, would be positive enough against such an assertion, even though the size, another very material objection, was not to be considered : the same reason may be applied to the Danish camp, though in other matters, the shape agreeth well with those before described of the Romans. The criterion between the Saxon and Danish fortifications, if any positive distinction can be made, shall be fully considered in a future discourse.

The camps of Elfred and Hasting described.

\* This camp is called Castle Bavord, and at present is an orchard to a farm-house, about a quarter of a mile from Sittenbourne, and is represented plate X, figure 1. A, is the hill or space occupied by the tents, surrounded by a broad ditch CCC, and an external vallum DDDD ; at B, is a communication from the house to the orchard ; E, is the farm-house, and F, a path leading to Sittenbourne. On the same plate, figure 2, is Castle Ruff, or

the camp of Hasting the Dane, within half a mile of the former. A, is the rising ground where the camp was made ; CCC, the ditch ; DDDD, the external vallum, yet perfect ; B, the present entrance. At the bottom is the section of both the castles ; and to the plate a scale is added, to determine the exact size of each entrenchment, both of which answer to the same scale.

Now

<sup>u</sup>Saxon camp  
now fortified.

Now we have seen the earth-work of the Saxon camp, we will consider by what means it was made secure; upon the verge of the hill, whereon the tents were erected, there is usually found the remains of an internal vallum, which appears to have run all round the same; on this, it is highly probable, they might set up a strong row of thick palisadoes, so as to enclose their tents on every side; then the enemy must first mount the external vallum, pass the ditch, and lastly, scale this inner vallum, before they could come at the people within, to do them any material damage. Of what kind of cloth their tents were made, cannot now be discovered; their form and appearance we have luckily preserved in ancient delineations, but they appear so very small, that one of them could not contain above four or five men with the least degree of convenience.\* their method of disposing of their men within their camp, when thus constructed, cannot be discovered; yet we may conceive, that they were lodged very close to each other, because in general their camps are not extensive.

Temples of the  
Saxons.

The Saxons, soon after their arrival in Britain, began to erect temples to their gods; though they frequently made use of the deserted churches of the Britons, and dedicated them to their deities. What ideas they had of symmetry and elegance at this early period cannot be determined; the only models left for them to copy from, were the mutilated cities of the Britons, † which were the last remains of Roman workmanship, and without doubt retained something of the genuine taste of that people; yet, hindered as the Saxons were by war and disturbance, we may justly conclude, that improvements in architecture advanced but slowly; churches and other places of worship were built of wood.‡

\* See plate XI. where a Saxon camp with the tents. &c. is represented according to the ideas of the author: there is the palisado upon the inner bank, and a bridge over the entrance in front, which might probably be drawn up in case of danger. The disposition of the view with the distance is ideal (though the particular objects are from good authority) and meant only to express a something like the face of the country and manner of buildings at that time: the castle at a distance, is in form, like those found in ancient Saxons MSS. The tents are exact representations of such as are found in a very curious and ancient MS. in the Cotton library, marked Claudius B. IV. for an account of which, see the first volume of the *Hopda Angelcýnnan*; or the Manners and Customs of the English: or the Cotton catalogue. The figures

also are from undoubted authority, as will be shewn hereafter in a little explanation of the plates, at the end of this volume.

† Gildas informs us, that the Saxons, on their first arrival, were great enemies to taste, and beat down and destroyed almost all the British cities.

‡ There was a time, says Bede, that there were no churches built of stone in all Britain, but the custom was to build them all of wood. Finnan, second bishop of Lindisfarne, built a church in that island, about the year 652, for a cathedral, not of stone but of wood, and covered it over with reeds; and so it continued until Eadbert, the successor of St. Cuthbert, and seventh bishop of Lindisfarne, took away the reeds, and covered it all over, walls and all, with sheets of lead. Bede's *Ecc. Hist.* lib. iii. cap. 25.

Architecture

Architecture may be said to have been restored, by the joint labours of Wilfrid, bishop of York, and Benedict Bishop, his companion; the latter made no less than six journales to Rome, in order to collect books, pictures, statues, and other ornaments; and also to form a proper taste and judgment in this useful science; nor did he stop here, but by his earnest endeavours, persuaded a certain number of artizans, to come from Italy into Britain, and assist him in his designs.\*

The first appearance of an elegant structure, was the church which Wilfrid built at Haugulfstad (now Hexam) on a spot of ground he had obtained of Etheldrida, the virgin-wife of Egfrid, king of Northumberland: this church he dedicated to St. Andrew, and spared no pains to render it perfectly magnificent; and in the description of it, which is left us, it really appears to have been considerably more so, than we could possibly expect to find in these dark ages. First we are told of large and strong subterraneous buildings, constructed of the finest polished stone, over which arose the wonderful superstructure, terminating with a lofty roof, supported by many elegant pillars, enclosed with long high walls, handsome towers, and with winding stairs to ascend the upper apartments: this was built by the artists who came with him from Rome.†

Some account of a church built by Wilfrid.

Soon after this, his companion, Benedict, laid the foundation of an abbey, upon the mouth of the river Were, about the year 674, and then went over into France, and brought with him a great number of masons from thence, to build the church with stone, after the manner of the Romans, which he admired. The church was dedicated to St. Peter, and he urged the workmen to labour so diligently, that in a year after mass was said in it: when the work was far advanced, he sent agents into France, to procure, if possible, some glass-makers; a kind of workmen altogether unknown to the Saxons at this period. His agents succeeded, and several of these artizans came over into Britain, and not only glazed the windows in the church and monastery which Benedict had built, but also instructed the Saxons in the art of making glass for windows, lamps, drinking vessels, and other uses.‡

The secret of making glass windows, was a great addition to the beauty of large buildings, which before this time had been only made of lattices, or even in their best state, filled out with fine linen cloths, ing.

Glass windows a great ornament to large buildings.

\* Malmfb. de gest. pontif. lib. iii.

† Edii Vita Wilfridi. After all this elaborate description the author proceeds in the following manner: "Non est mea parvitas hoc sermone explicare quod sanctus ipse presul animarum a spiritu Dei docuit opere facere excogitavit: ne que

" ullam domum aliam citra alpes montes  
" talem edificatum audivimus." These encomiums, however, may appear a little extravagant, but we must recollect that such buildings were very extraordinary in Britain.

‡ Bede Hist. Abbot Weremuthen.

stretched upon frames of wood;\* either of which must have been very inconvenient in winter, especially in cold wet weather. From this time, it is evident, we may date the æra of elegance amongst the Saxons; and it seems from subsequent accounts; that they pursued the plan laid down by the above mentioned ingenious men, with considerable attention; and great improvements were made in every one of the arts requisite to produce good and substantial edifices.

The chapel of  
Ina.

Ina, king of the West Saxons (if the monkish writers have not exaggerated) built a famous chapel at Glastonbury, which was so highly enriched with gold and silver, and such a variety of curious ornaments, that nothing can be conceived more rich and beautiful.† After this period, as the people became more zealous, the wooden churches were frequently destroyed, and large stone structures erected in their stead.

Palaces of the  
Saxon kings.

The palaces of the Saxon monarchs, without doubt, partook of the grandeur and elegance of their churches. In the earlier time, as is most probable, the kings and chief nobles lived in castles and fortified places; because as they had not yet secured their conquests, it behoved them to be constantly upon their guard; but in after ages, and more particularly when the above mentioned improvements took place, they began to wall and fortify whole cities; wherein they caused stately palaces to be erected for the reception of themselves and their families.

Monasteries  
their elegance.

The next places of consequence were the monasteries and religious houses; some of which must have been very capacious, to contain a great multitude of devotees; and as these places in general, were built by bigotted zealots, we can make but little doubt of their being grand and magnificent, according to the taste that prevailed at those times. It is true indeed, St. Cuthbert, the saint of Durham, constructed a monastery upon a much more simple plan; wherein the monks were shut up by high walls, from the sight of all improper objects. The building within, consisted of two houses, containing the different lodgings of the monks; a chapel and a room for common uses: the roof he made of unhewn timber, and thatched it over with straw; the wall which surrounded the whole of these edifices, was built of rough unpolished stone, without any cement or mortar, but rudely cast up, and banked on both sides with turfs and earth; without the

\* Malmſbury making mention of the repairs done by Wilfrid to the cathedral of York, goes on thus: "the bishop grieving to see the ruinous state of the cathedral church, which had been built by king Edwine, at the desire of Paulinus, immediately began to repair it: he restored the roof, and covered it with

" sheets of lead; he also white-washed the  
" walls with lime, and put glass into the  
" windows, some of which, had admitted  
" the light through fine linen cloths, and  
" others through lattices." W. Malmſb.  
de geſt. pont. lib. iii.

† Malmſb. Antiq. Glaston.

wall

wall he made a larger house, to receive those who should come to visit him; the whole was close by a fair spring, which served them continually with water.\*

We now come to their domestic buildings, and these we have the greatest reason to conclude, were in a very rude and unpolished state; they were most likely only one story high; framed with timber, and the walls made of plaister or clay: like those of the Britons, they might be of a circular form, with an aperture left in the roof for the smoke to go out, and the other part thatched over with reeds and straw; but now we are treating of the houses of the commoner sort of people: the habitations of the nobility, according to their rank and wealth, were much more elegant and convenient, and from their appearance in the ancient delineation, seem to have consisted of several apartments, and the roofs are covered over either with shingles, tiles, slates, or lead; but of these we shall see more hereafter.

This is, it is true, but an imperfect view of the state of architecture amongst the Saxons, but our conceptions on this head, will be much more clear and obvious, when we enter into the account of those ages immediately succeeding this; for then we may easily figure to ourselves the gradual improvements, made from time to time. At present it remains for us to consider, what materials were made use of by the Saxons and their ancestors, at the time we are now treating of. Amongst the Germans, the chief materials were wood for the frames of the houses, clay to daub over by way of walls, and dung, reeds, or straw, to thatch or cover the roofs; they seem to have known nothing of the art of masonry; bricks they neither knew how to form, or even the use of. The art of carpentry was but ill understood, or at least but little attended to; for their timber they used unsquared, and put it together without consulting the beauty or neatness of the workmanship: their greatest skill in carpentry must have been manifested in their ploughs and other implements of husbandry; but these belonged to their slaves, and were most likely also made by them; for the freemen looked upon such employment with an eye of sovereign contempt.†

Where the Anglo Saxons learned their first rudiments of architecture, cannot so easily be determined; unless they brought them with them from Germany; for if Tong Castle was actually built by Hengist and his followers soon after his arrival, it proves, that they must have been well skilled in one of the most necessary requisites of architecture, namely masonry, this strong foundation of solid and permanent materials may clearly prove; and since we find so much skill in the ground-work, may we not easily conceive that the superstructure might have been answerable. This foundation, as we have before observed, consists of large rough flints, and other craggy stones, laid closely toge-

\* Bede, vita Cuthberti.

† Tacit, de Morib. Germ.

ther, and united by a strong cement, which being now grown harder by time, would require immense labour to rub it up. We soon after find the Saxons making buildings of stone, shaped and squared; yet we must not suppose they ceased then to make use of the rubble, for that was a standard material, used in large edifices for many ages afterwards: with square stones they frequently ornamented the corners, or faced the whole structure, for buildings entirely of large stones without the rubble were very rare. Bricks, if used at all, were not general; whether from their ignorance in the ready way of making and burning them, or from their preferring other materials, cannot be discovered. By the appearance of houses in the rude delineations of the Saxons, we may be led to think, that besides thatch and shingles, they also used lead coverings and slates, or something much resembling them: it is abundantly evident that lead was used in magnificent edifices, as we have seen before.\*

An attempt to discover the authors of buildings, &c. by ornaments in MSS.

It is impossible to ascertain the exact date of many very curious and valuable antiquities which are often found amongst the ruins of splendid edifices. As much as a loss are we frequently in regard to the remaining edifices themselves, to determine with certainty, what are strictly Saxon, and what are not so; therefore every attempt to rescue such venerable antiquities from the obscurity in which they are unhappily involved, will perhaps be thought laudable; for this purpose, the sort of ornaments made use of by any particular set of people, should be diligently attended to: therefore to this discourse, we have subjoined a title page, exhibiting a great variety of scroll work, and animals, by way of ornaments interwoven with each other; † these drawn by a Saxon anchorite, named Bilfrith, as early as the beginning of the eight century, may prove more than mere matter of curiosity; for if upon examination of ancient buildings, or any other antiquities, ornaments of like nature may be pointed out; we may by this means be able, in some measure, to ascertain, not only to what people we owe those performances, but also to give some guess at the æra in which they were made: and this opinion, it is hoped, will not be too hastily condemned, especially when hereafter we shall make it our business, not only to show the alteration of taste in such ornaments at different periods as found in illuminated manuscripts, but also prove, in a great variety of particulars, how much they conformed with the ornaments upon buildings, altars, shrines, tombs, and the like, evidently of the same age with such manuscripts.

Carpenters art.

From what we have seen concerning the architecture of the Anglo Saxons, we may safely conclude; that the art of carpentry was well understood amongst them; and that more especially, when we recollect that most of their houses were framed with wood, and the roofs frequently

\* See the foregoing pages.

† Vide plate XX of this volume.

covered

covered with shingles, so that they must have hewn their timber, sawed it into planks, and plained it smooth; it was necessary also for them to joint it together with mortices and tenons, after which they might beautify their work with variety of mouldings, and other ornaments.\*

Masonry was greatly improved by foreign assistance; so that we may necessarily suppose they could not be ignorant of machines for raising weights, and a great variety of other engines, absolutely necessary for the completion of great works; and this is abundantly evident, when we hear that the foundation of the church at Medisbamstede, (built by Peada, the first Christian king of Mercia) was made with such large stones, that eight yoke of oxen could scarcely move one of them.† In the middle of the eighth century, Ethelbald, the tenth king of Mercia, being desirous of building a church of stone at Croyland, where St. Guthlac had erected a small oratory with wood, he found the soil so spongy and hollow, as to render it entirely unfit for the support of a stone edifice; to remedy this inconvenience, he first caused large piles of oak to be made, and driven down into the ground, and a great quantity of loam, and stiff clay was rammed round about them; by which means he obtained a solid and permanent foundation.‡ Many of the other dependent arts we have seen already, and when they were first introduced.

### C H A P. III.

#### *Art of War, and military Discipline of the ancient Germans and their Descendants.*

THE strong characteristic of the ancient Germans, was, their enthusiastic love of glory, and passion for arms. Their youth, from their very infancy, were bred up in the self-same notions, and those alone esteemed, who, upon all occasions seemed eager for the battle; for this cause, provisions and plunders won by the sword, were esteemed far more honourable than those attained by labour, and the careful cultivation of the ground: therefore, it is not to be wondered at, that hopes of spoil should frequently call them to the field.§

When war was to be formally declared against any nation, it was done in their solemn councils, and by the common consent of all the princes

The love of war amongst the Germans.

War, how declared, and general chosen.

\* Vide the *Hondda Angel cynnan*, or the *Manners and Customs of the English*, vol. I.

† Robert de Swynham, in Gunston's History of the Church of Peterborough.

‡ Ingulphus Hist. fol. 1.

§ Tacit. de Morib. Germ. & Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

and freemen there assembled; they then proceeded to elect their chief, which was also done by general consent; and their choice constantly fell upon him who had most signalized himself by his courage and personal bravery, so that by his example his followers might be animated with fresh courage, and resist with the greater bravery the attacks of their enemies; for as in battle it was esteemed a great disgrace for the general to be overcome, so was it a perpetual shame and ignominy in his followers not to share with him in the labour and danger of the fight, or to return alive from that field where he had been slain.\*

Form of elect-  
ing the gene-  
ral.

When their general was chosen, it was customary with them to set him upon a shield, and so he was borne upon men's shoulders through the croud, who with repeated shouts and acclamations confirmed their choice.† At other times, and in matters of less moment, their prince would lay before his followers the reasons which he had for declaring war in such a place, and that if they would approve his conduct, he himself would become their leader, and desired those who were willing to accompany him to come forth, and join with him in his expedition; all who approved of the proposals of the prince rose up presently, and promised their assistance, and were praised by the multitude, but such as refused to accompany him were numbered with the deserters and traitors, and their honour and credit was lost for ever afterwards.‡

Consulting the  
gods in times  
of war.

Before they would proceed to battle, or set out on any great expedition, they would consult the gods by casting lots; they also noted the flight of birds, their singing, and noises; but more particularly they attended to the neighing of horses.§ Before a great battle they would procure, if they could, a prisoner from the army of their enemy, and then they chose out one of their own soldiers, and both being armed according to the custom of their country, were brought into the field, where they fought with each other, and the prefaces were made of the success of either army, according to the issue of the combat.||

Forces of the  
Germans.

In raising troops for the prosecution of any considerable war, every pagus, or district, furnished a certain number, divided into separate corps, one hundred in a band, under the leading of their own proper officers, called by the name of Centeni, or the leader of a hundred, and all these were under the conduct of their prince. Their principal force consisted in their infantry; their horses were not very swift of foot, but were

\* Tacit. ut sup.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 6.

‡ Cæs. Bèl. Gal. lib. vi. cap. 21.

§ See more of these matters in the ninth chapter of this part.

|| Tacit. de Morib. German-Saxo. The grammarian adds, that the ancient Germans would not go to war without first consulting their wives: again, says he,

when they declared war against their enemies, they set their spears before the temple of the gods, and a sacred horse was led out, when, if he put his right foot forward, the omen was holden good, but if, on the contrary, his left foot was first put forward, it was esteemed an unlucky sign, and they desisted from pursuing their intended enterprize.

managed



managed by their riders in such a manner, that they would turn from side to side with the utmost dexterity. The arms both of the horse and foot soldiers were the same, namely the *framea*, a sort of javelin, handsomely made, and headed with a short narrow piece of iron, extremely sharp, and a shield.

There were but few of them who could purchase swords; and as to any kind of defensive armour, either for their heads, or for the security of their bodies, it was scarcely known amongst them.\* Their shields they took great delight in, and usually ornamented them with a variety of colours.†

When they arranged their troops for the battle, they placed their infantry (in which their chief strength consisted) in the form of a wedge, pointing towards the enemy,‡ and the front of it was composed of certain chosen youth; on each wing were placed the cavalry, and when the attack was begun, the main body of infantry and the cavalry advanced with equal pace, observing diligently each others motions, so that the one was neither too hasty in bearing down upon the enemy, nor the other too far behind. In the encounter it was usual for the infantry to mingle with the horse, and so fight jointly together. In forming this pointed battle of the infantry, men were not mixed promiscuously together as they might come, but placed in separate bodies, each body composed of the dearest friends and nearest relations; by which means, besides the love of glory, and self-defence, their valour was excited to the highest degree in being anxious for the preservation of those, united to them by the irresistible ties of the nearest consanguinity. When they had thus arranged their army, in the rear was placed their

\* Tacit. de Morib. German. See the soldier thus armed, represented plate XVIII. the middle figure on the plate.

† "The shield was most commonly made of wood, bark, or leather. The shields belonging to warriors of distinction were of iron or brass, ornamented with painting and sculpture, often finely gilt, and sometimes plated over with gold." "The Scandinavians had them of a long oval form, just the height of the bearer, in order to protect him from arrows, darts, and stones. They beside made use of them to carry the dead to the grave, to terrify the enemy by clashing their arms against them, to form upon occasion a kind of shelter, or tent, when they were obliged to encamp in the open field, or when the weather was bad. Nor was the shield less useful in naval encounters; for, if the fear of falling into the enemies' hands obliged, any of

"those warriors to cast himself into the sea, he could easily escape by swimming upon his buckler. Lastly, they made a rampart with their shields, in the form of a circle; and at the end of a campaign they suspended them against the walls of their houses, as the finest decoration with which they could adorn them. When a young warrior was first enlisted, they gave him a white smooth buckler, which was called 'The shield of expectation;' this he carried, till by some signal exploit he had obtained leave to have proofs of his valour engraven upon it; for this reason, none but such persons as had distinguished themselves by their services presumed to carry shields adorned with any symbol, &c." Northern Antiq. vol. I. pages 240, 241, & 242.

‡ The outward form of which was not unlike the Greek letter Δ.

waggons, their baggage, arms, and provisions, as also their wives and children, and such as were sick and wounded, under a proper guard; by which means they made a kind of rampart, to secure them from any attacks from that quarter.\*

War songs, and  
manner of  
fighting.

They advanced to the battle singing certain verses,† by which they encouraged each other, and worked up their passions to a prodigious pitch; they began with a low voice, which they increased gradually, according to the tune of the battle, until they made a prodigious loud and resounding noise, in which they affected a certain roughness of voice; and added to its terror by putting their mouths before their targets, which by reverberation occasioned the sound to appear stronger and fuller. Inspired with this enthusiastic fury, they rushed upon the foe, and with continual noise heightened the horror of the scene, and frequently struck a terror into the souls of their enemies; especially when it was accompanied with the repeated cries and howlings of their wives and children, who were placed in the rear as witnesses of their valour, and who were continually attendant upon them, bringing them food during the battle, and encouraging them to fight bravely. If the women saw any of their party give ground, it was usual for them to enter the battle, and expose themselves to danger; by which means they reminded their relations of the consequence of the victory, who, to preserve them from captivity, would frequently rally again, and sometimes obtained a conquest where the battle had been almost lost. As fast as any were wounded, they retired, or were carried from the fight, to the women in the rear, who dressed their wounds with the greatest care and tenderness; and when any one was slain, his companions conveyed the body to a place of safety; for even in doubtful battles they were careful to preserve the dead bodies of their friends from the hands of their enemies.‡

Stratagems of  
war.

They would frequently seem to retire from their enemies, to draw them from their post, when suddenly turning about, and taking the advantage of the disorder their stratagem might occasion, they renewed the battle with fresh alacrity, and frequently obtained the victory by their policy. But of all others, the Catti, a nation of the Germans, inhabiting the Hercynian forest, were the most skillful in the art of war; they preferred choice men for their leaders, to whom they hearkened with great attention, and obeyed their orders with the utmost resolution: they kept closely in their ranks, and bridled their heat to engage by prudence and discretion, carefully taking every advantage of the foe; they reposed their whole confidence in the skill and prudence of their general, and the battle was conducted with the greatest regularity. When they entrenched their camp, they did it carefully in the night season.§

\* Tacit. ut supra.

† These songs they called *Barditus*:

‡ Tacit. ut supra.

§ Tacitus completes the character of this nation with observing, that the other Germans made skirmishes but the Catti made war.

Amongst

Amongst the Germans, every man was obliged to manifest his valour, or he was branded with perpetual disgrace; for, as it was a shame for the king, or leader, to be overcome in battle, so was it an equal shame for his followers to abandon him, for they were all bound by oath to support him in his expedition. And because they hoped for the assistance of the gods in battle, they carried before their armies certain images and monuments, taken from the sacred groves. After the arrival of Wodin, they used to engrave Runic characters upon their spears, as charms which would prevail upon the gods to assist them in the war; and in return, their custom was cruelly to select every tenth captive to sacrifice before his unhallowed shrine.\* Upon a youth's being admitted to bear arms, he was presented with a shield, as a sacred badge † of his becoming an useful member of the community in general; and if by any neglect, or want of courage, he lost his shield in battle, he was branded with infamy, and debarred being present at the public sacrifices. Amongst the Carleens, and perhaps amongst all the German nations, a singular custom prevailed of letting their hair and beards grow until they had slain an enemy; but after they had done their country service, or obtained spoils by slaughter, every one cut the hair from his forehead, thinking he had then paid the price of his birth, and was become worthy of his parents and his country: and none but such as were unvaliant and despicable would long continue without the privilege of cutting their hair, after they had attained to years of maturity. Also, every man was obliged to wear an iron ring about his neck, as a badge of slavery, until by the slaughter of any enemy he was permitted to take it off. ‡

This view which we have taken of the Germans, is of their most ancient state; and from this time to their arrival in Britain, a space of full three hundred years, we may naturally suppose a variety of alterations might take place relative to their warlike habits, weapons, and military discipline: and this we may be led to believe, because we find the chief arms of the Saxons, in their first battle against the Scots, under their conductor, Hengist, to have been large long swords.§

Our next step must be to examine the arms and warlike habits of the Saxons upon their establishment in Britain; and the only authority we can have recourse to on this occasion, is, the delineations of them as left by themselves, which have been too long passed by unnoticed. It is true, the earliest manuscripts that we meet with are far from being coeval with their first arrival, and few indeed so ancient as the heptarchy itself; yet by the constant resemblance that we find in all the various delineations of soldiers, and other figures, we may reasonably conclude, that

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† In the public council he is, says Tacitus, either by one of the princes, or his father, or some one of his kindred, presented with a spear and a shield, which is

with them the *toga virilis*, and the first honour bestowed upon young men.

‡ Tacit. de Morib. German.

§ H. Hunt. lib. ii.

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§ H. Hunt. lib. ii.

no material alteration took place from the last three hundred years before the establishment of the Danes in England: however, all that can be traced out will be regularly shewn, and the authority for such assertions fully explained.

The classes of the Saxon soldiers, and their habits.

The foot soldiers of the Saxons seem to be divided into three classes; first, those who fought with long spears; secondly, those who chiefly fought with swords, without spears; and lastly, those who fought both with swords and spears. The general habit of the first class, is a tunic with sleeves, which reaches down to the knees, and bound round the waist: in the most ancient delineations they seldom appear to have cloaks, which are very commonly added to their dress, as they come lower down to the end of the Saxon æra. They sometimes are represented with oval shields, big enough to cover all their body, though they are frequently seen without them. Perhaps there were two sorts of these spear-men, one of them slightly armed, having only their spear for skirmishes, and the other bearing shields for their defence in closer actions. The second class are the swordsmen, who, beside a large long, two-edged sword, are usually seen with shields; the more ancient the delineations are, the smaller the shield is generally made; on the contrary, those at the end of the Saxon æra are very large. The habit of the swordsman, like the spear-man, is a short tunic, with sleeves to the wrist; like them too, they have sometimes cloaks, buckled on the right shoulder, though they are often drawn without. The last class do not so frequently occur; but the swords and spears that they bear differ nothing from the former: these men seem never to have had either shields or cloaks; their tunic exactly resembles those before-described. The greater part of these soldiers appear to have their legs naked; but they wear shoes, which seem to be black, made, without doubt, of strong leather, and bound round the instep: but in the drawings of later date, besides these shoes, we see evidently a sort of stockings, which are drawn to the middle of the leg. The helmets that they wear (though many are figured without any) appear to be nothing more than the skin of some animal sowed together, and the hairy side turned outwards.\*

The habit of the horse soldier.

The horse soldier differed nothing in habit from the foot, having the same sort of tunic, cloak, shoes, and helmet. In the ancient drawings he has a spur with a single point; he rides upon a saddle, but has no stirrups; the bridle, and other trappings of the horse, have nothing further particular in them. His weapon anciently was a lance, which he bore in his right hand, whilst he guided his horse with his left, without a shield, or the appearance of any defensive armour, except his helmet.†

\* All these soldiers are represented on plate XIV. of this volume; and see also the two figures in the fore-ground, plate XI.

† The horse soldier is represented plate XI. of this volume.



The habit of the king, when he went to war, seems to have been equally simple with those of his officers. Like them he wore a tunic, with sleeves reaching down to his wrists, and bound round the waist, from whence it hung as low as the knees; he also wore a cloak, which was buckled upon his right shoulder: his legs appear to have been naked, and his shoes exactly the same with those before-described. His chief distinction is the crown, which he constantly wears upon his head, and which answered the purpose of a helmet.\* His arms, when he fought on foot, were a sword and a shield; but when he was on horseback, he had only the lance.

The habit of a king when he went to war.

As to the methods in which the Saxons arranged their armies, and their military discipline, from the time of their arrival to the end of the heptarchy, cannot easily be ascertained. It is true, the monks of the middle ages have given several long and particular accounts of the order in which the armies were drawn up, in some of the most noted battles during this period; but we must recollect, that these monks lived at a time very remote from the actions they describe, and therefore could not possibly be acquainted with the particulars of them: and this we may be well assured of, since it is no uncommon thing to find the same battle differently described by different authors. From these accounts it will be impossible to trace out the truth; for this reason we must pass the subject over, for the present, and see hereafter what light can be thrown upon it, in a review of the military order and discipline, after the heptarchy was ended.

The methods used by the ancient Saxons in the arrangement of their armies unknown.

#### C H A P. IV.

*State of Agriculture, and the dependent Arts, amongst the ancient Germans, and their Descendants, the Saxons.*

IT will be in vain to seek for any very great improvements in agriculture amongst a people who despised every kind of labour, save that of war. The cultivation of land amongst the Germans was committed to the wretched slaves, and the most servile of their dependants;† what time they could spare from war, was spent in amusements or toils of a different cast; amongst which, hunting was one of the chief: for this they followed, not as a sport only, but frequently to provide themselves with food.‡

Agriculture dis-regarded by the Germans.

\* See the figure of a king in his warlike habit, plate XIX. No. 1. of this volume: & vide various figures of kings in the first volume of the *Historia Angel cýnnan*, or the Manners and Customs of the English.

† Tacit. de Morib. German. Cæsar's Comment. &c.

‡ Culver. Antiq. German.



The Saxons  
fond of pastu-  
rage.

Their descendants, the Saxons, on their arrival in Britain, paid a much greater regard to pasturage than any other rural pursuit: it is evident that this was the chief means of their subsistence, by the many laws for regulating the prices of tame cattle, directing how they should be fed, and also for the preserving them from thieves; so little had the South Saxons attended to any thing else, that in the year 681, when Wilfrid, bishop of York, (who had been driven from his see) took refuge amongst them, they were totally ignorant of the art of catching fish, though they had such abundance amongst them.\*

The beginning  
of husbandry  
amongst the  
Saxons.

From what has been said, we may gather, that the Saxons, on their arrival in Britain, were much better swordsmen than husbandmen; but soon after their establishment in the island, finding none to plunder, (for the Britons, by repeated misfortunes driven from their cultivated possessions, had fled to their secret retreats amongst the woods and mountains, and the tillage of land was entirely neglected, so that ruin and desolation appeared in every part of the island) they were obliged to have recourse to agriculture; therefore, every one who was possessed of ground, portioned it out amongst his slaves and dependants; and these portions were distinguished by the names of inlands and outlands: the former was that part of their estate which lay contiguous to, and most convenient for the service of the dwelling-house, or mansion, of the proprietor himself, and was for this reason commonly reserved in his own hands, and managed by his own bondmen and slaves, for the more immediate use and sustenance of his family and household; the latter outland, or utland, was that which lay at a greater distance from the mansion-house, and was commonly divided into two parts; one of which they disposed of amongst their free servitors, or companions, as a reward of their fidelity, to be freely enjoyed by them, for one or more years, for life or lives, and sometimes in perpetuity, whilst the other was let or granted out to other persons, to be by them likewise occupied for a longer or shorter space, according to the will of the proprietor. This latter sort are thought to have been the conditional tenants, or land-holders, distinguished in the Anglo-Saxon records by the name of ceorls, or churls; and, as an acknowledgment, besides some other personal marks of dependance, were annually obliged to pay their lord a certain portion of victuals, or of such other things as were deemed necessary for the support of hospitality.† Yet the owners of land were not left at liberty to exact what rent they pleased of their tenants; but it was settled by law, and ascertained according to the number of hides, or ploughed lands there were in a farm, or portion of land; which rent the land-holder paid in various articles, as cat-

\* Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 13. Fishing was practised by the slaves. By the laws of Ina, some part of the rent of farms that lay upon the banks of rivers were paid in fish, so that it is probable the ceorls, or

husbandmen, who kept those farms, employed their slaves in this manner.

† Vide Squire on the English Constitution, pages 105 & 106.



tle, poultry, fish, ale, cheese, butter, or grain, according to the nature of his farm, its produce, or the custom of the country.\*

In the same manner were the greater part of the crown lands farmed out to the eorls, or husbandmen, who paid their annual rent by furnishing the king's household with a given quantity of provisions, according to the extent and value of the lands which they possessed; but the lowliness of the rent of farms in general at this period seems to be a sufficient proof of the poor state of agriculture.

Every eorl, who was the free husbandman, had slaves and dependants under him, to perform the offices necessary for the cultivation of the lands that he possessed, all of which was done immediately under his direction. In the first commencement of their labours, there can be little doubt made, but that all these requisites were performed in a very slovenly manner, and of course their labours could be but slenderly repaid; but we find them in the eighth century making greater advances in this necessary art; the plough, it is true, had but one handle, but in other respects it was provided with a coulter, and a ploughshare, little, if at all, inferior to those made use of in the present day. To remedy the inconvenience of its having but one handle, it had two wheels, which run before it, to prevent the share from entering too deep into the earth.† Two people constantly attended the plough, one to drive the oxen forward, and regulate their pace; (this attendant, who seems in general to be a lad, or young man, carried in his hand a long staff, with a goad, or sharp point, at the end, with which he kept the oxen to their labour, by pricking them when they grew lazy;) the person who guided the plough, which doubtless required great skill, was an elderly man; he held the plough stilt with his right hand, whilst in his left he bore a large cudgel, or sometimes a kind of hatchet, to break the large clods of dirt, or whatsoever else might impede the course of the

Crown lands,  
how farmed  
out.

Husbandry, how  
conducted by  
the Saxons.

\* In the laws made by Ina, king of the West Saxons, who governed that kingdom from A. D. 669, to A. D. 728, a farm of ten hides was to pay the following rent: twelve casks of honey, three hundred loaves of bread, twelve casks of strong ale, thirty casks of small ale, two grown oxen, or ten wethers, ten geese, twenty hens, ten cheeses, one cask of butter, five salmon, twenty pounds of forage, and one hundred eels. Leg. Inæ, apud Lamb. cap. 69. Ant. Wili. Leg. Sax.

† A representation of the plough here described, accompanies this chapter, see plate XV. which is taken from the ancient manuscript of Coedman, at Oxford. The authenticity of the delineation may be confirmed by Bede, who expressly tells

us the plough had but one handle at his time; for, in the Life of Eilfrin, abbot of Weremouth, he says, "This abbot, being a strong man, and of humble disposition, would frequently assist the monks in their rural labour, sometimes guiding the plough by its stilt, or handle, sometimes winnowing the corn, sometimes forging the instruments of husbandry upon an anvil." Bedæ Hist. Weremuthen. We may here observe, that at this time of day the monks, or secular canons, cultivated their own lands, and performed every other requisite necessary for the providing food for their brotherhood, all of them being obliged to labour in their turn at some useful art or other.

plough.

plough.\* In general, there are but two oxen joined to the plough, which go abreast, though sometimes there are four joined two and two.†

Mills, when first used in Britain, not well known.

It will be unnecessary to enter into any long discourse concerning their method of sowing the grain, or harrowing the ground; all these seem to have been done in a manner little differing from the usages of the present time. The harrow was composed of a long square frame of timber, set full of iron teeth. In what manner they manured their ground, or their rules for letting it lie fallow, with a great variety of other particulars relative to the art of cultivating lands, cannot easily be investigated; only we shall remark, that every ceorl who was provided with ploughs, and other instruments of husbandry, had his own smith, whom he kept in his house, to fabricate, and keep them in order.‡ At what time mills were first used in Britain, cannot be determined; hand-mills, which, without doubt, were the most ancient of any, we may conceive were known in the time of Ethelbert, king of Kent, who ruled that nation from the year 560, to the year 616; for, in his laws, a particular fine of twelve shillings is imposed upon any man who should corrupt the king's grinding maid;§ hence it is also evident, that they were turned and tended by women; but it is probable that before the end of the heptarchy water-mills were erected, because in ancient deeds and grants of lands, we find mention made of mills, which are generally said to be situated near the water; but of this subject we shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter.

Secondary arts relative to husbandry.

Gardening, planting, and other secondary arts of like nature, might perhaps be known to the Saxons before the end of the heptarchy; but to what degree of perfection they were carried, cannot be determined: however, we may believe that their skill in these arts was not very great, and at best they might only attend to the cultivation of some few useful herbs on the one part, and the planting of fruit-trees for use, rather than beauty or pleasure, on the other; and this much they might naturally fall into, because the Britons understood these arts very well, and, without doubt, many of their gardens and orchards might be yet undestroyed when the Saxons took possession of the land, which would be sufficient hints to those conquerors to follow such provident examples.

\* See plate XXVI. vol. I. of the *Horda Angel cýnnan*, or the Manners and Customs of the English.

† Ibid. plate X.

‡ By the laws of Ina, when a ceorl left

his dwelling, or the lands which he held, he was permitted to take with him his overseer, his smith, and a nurse. Leg. Ina, cap. 64.

§ Leges Ethelberti, apud Wilkins.

## C H A P. V.

*Navigation and Commerce of the Saxons.*

LONG before the Saxons left their ancient seat in Germany, and passed over into Britain, they had rendered their name famous for their piracies, particularly infesting the British seas, and frequently making descents upon the southern and eastern coasts of Britain, and plundering the inhabitants. This obliged the Romans, who were then in possession of all the southern divisions of the island, not only to keep a strong fleet to scour the seas, but to erect forts upon the shores which were most exposed to the ravages of these lawless plunderers, and from them obtained the name of the Saxon shore; these forts, as we have seen before, were put under the command of an officer, called the Count of the Saxon shore, in Britain.\*

The Saxons anciently great pirates.

After the departure of the Romans, the wretched Britons were driven to the utmost extremities. In the north, their restless foes, the Scots and Picts, destroyed their country, and spoiled them of all their valuable possessions, whilst their southern coasts lay open to an enemy full as formidable, and equally destructive. Horrid alternative! either to fall by the swords of their foes, or seeking to avoid them, be drowned in the sea, to whose brink they were pursued. In this distressful situation we find them making application to their foreign enemy for protection, opening their arms to receive a foe whose only fortune depended on their swords, and whose only wealth was plunder and the spoils of war: this step completed the ruin of the Britons, and gave the Saxons firm possession in the land, which they never quitted, but continued increasing their power, and extending their conquests.†

The miseries of the Britons.

The vessels which the Saxons generally used upon these piratical expeditions were very light, and so built as to weather out a storm, in which a larger and stronger ship would be in danger of perishing; they were generally swift sailers, so that the pirates could suddenly assail the foe, and as easily escape if they were overpowered: by this means they became a formidable and dangerous enemy; for, on the one hand, the enemy could not be aware of their attack, so on the other it was in vain to pursue them when they fled. They would also frequently venture to sea in little skiffs, like those before-described of the Britons, consisting only of a light frame of timber, and covered over with skins prepared for that purpose.‡

The vessels of the Saxons.

Yet, for particular occasions, it seems, the Saxons had larger and stronger ships; for the first troop of this people who came over into Bri-

Large ships of the Saxons.

\* Vide page 268 of this volume.

† Apoll. Sidonii lib. viii. Epist. 6. &

‡ See the latter end of the first part of Ibid. Author. Carmen. VII. the Chronicle,

tain, under the conduct of Hengist and Horfa, arrived in three long ships;\* and though the exact number of soldiers cannot be ascertained, yet we may conceive it was considerable; some thought their army consisted of nine thousand men,† and if this is true, each ship must have carried three thousand, which is a prodigious number.

The Saxons put a stop to commerce.

The Saxons on their first arrival in Britain, put a stop to all the trade which had existed to that period: the making themselves rich by any other means than the edge of their swords, seems never to have entered the ideas of that people. After their armies were landed in the island, we hear no more of their ships; and it appears certain, that for full two centuries from their first arrival, they had but few vessels, and those, most likely, but ill constructed.

The low state of trade at this period.

The state of trade amongst them, during this period, was at a low ebb, for there was no commercial intercourse between them and the Britons; and it seems that London, the capital of the little kingdom of Essex, was their only center of all foreign commerce. This place we find resorted to by merchants of several nations, who came thither both by sea and land, on the account of trade;‡ those that came by land were the native Saxons, who brought their goods with them, in order to exchange with the foreign merchants, who for that purpose crossed the sea from Gaul, and other parts of the continent.

Offa improves the shipping of the Saxons.

In this manner it is likely that commerce was carried on, until the middle of the eighth century, about which time, Offa mounted the throne of Mercia; this great prince encouraged his subjects to fit out ships, and carry goods in their own bottoms to the continent; and this he did with a view of raising a naval power to defend his dominions. This dawn of commerce was however soon over-clouded by the wars which followed in the Heptarchy, occasioned by the ambitious attempts of Offa, upon the territories of his neighbours. The other princes justly fearing his growing power, made application to Charlemagne, beseeching him to interpose his authority, and to command Offa to desist: accordingly the emperor wrote to him; but his letters not being regarded, a final stop was put to the trade which was carried on upon the continent, between the foreign merchants and the Saxons, until such time as a good understanding was restored between the emperor and Offa.§ After the death of this warlike Mercian prince, the increase of ships was not attended to, and of course the trade fell back

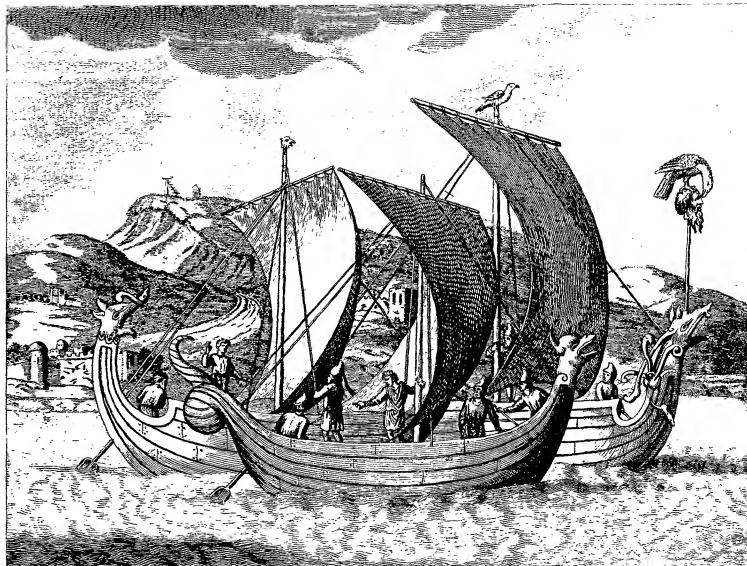
\* *Tribus longis navibus.* Bede Ecc. Hist. lib. I. cap. 15. "Tribus (ut lingua ejus exprimitur) Cýulis, nostra lingua "longis navibus." Gildæ Hist. cap. 23.

† Thus Verstegan says, quoting his authority from John Pomarius, for all ancient authors are silent upon this head; yet from the words of Gildas, we may

conceive, that their number was very considerable, though they did not think themselves strong enough to conquer the land without fresh supplies.

‡ Bede Hist. Ecc.

§ Wm. Malmsb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. I. cap. 4.



into its wonted channel, until it was restored with greater glory by Ælfred the Great.

Another hindrance to trade in general, was the restraint laid on barterings and exchanges; by the laws of the Saxon kings, no bargain was permitted to be made without some principal person or chief magistrate being present, and a witness to it.\* The design of these laws was to regulate the terms of bartering, and to prevent all impositions and frauds; besides, as few persons at that time could write, such evidences might be produced, if any dispute should afterwards arise between the two parties. Though these laws were very good in themselves, and prevented any unfair dealing, they doubtless were a prodigious hindrance to commerce, which ought to be carried on in a quick and uninterrupted manner.

The form of the Saxon ships, at the end of the eighth century, or the beginning of the ninth, is happily preserved in some of the ancient manuscripts of that date: they were scarcely more than a very large boat, and seem to be built of stout planks, laid one over the other, in the manner as is done in the present time; their heads and sterns are very erect, and rise high out of the water, ornamented at top with some uncouth head of an animal, rudely cut; they have but one mast, the top of which is also decorated with a bird, the head of a bird, or some such device; to this mast is made-fast a large sail, which from its nature and construction, could only be useful when the vessel went before the wind; the ship was steered by a large oar, with a flat end, very broad, passing by the side of the stern; and this was managed by the pilot, who sat in the stern, and from thence issued his orders to the mariners.†

\* In the laws of Lothair, king of Kent, it is enacted, That if any Kentish Saxon, should buy any thing at London, and bring it into Kent, he should have two or three honest men, or the king's *port-reeve* (the chief magistrate of the city) present at the bargain. Wilkin. Leg. Sax. By the same laws, no man was allowed to buy any thing above the value of twenty-pence, except in a town, and in the presence of the chief magistrate, or other witness: the same re-

straint was on bartering one commodity for another; which none were permitted to do, except such bargains were made before the sheriff, the mass priest, the lord of the manor, or some other person of undoubted veracity; upon pain of paying a fine of thirty shillings, besides the forfeiture of the goods to exchanged to the lord of the manor. Wilkin. ut sup.

† See these ships taken from ancient delineations, plate XVI. of this volume.



## C H A P. VI.

*Working of Metals, &c. and the Coins of the Saxon Kings.*

The art of working iron known to the Germans.

THE art of working mines and refining of metals, we may be well assured, was but little thought on by a people so rude and unpolished as the ancient Germans; yet it is plain they had some knowledge of iron, and also could work it into form; their chief care was bestowed upon the manufacturing of their arms; the heads of their javelins especially; were made extremely handsome, and sharpened with great art; but they were small and slender, because iron was not plentiful amongst them; besides their arms, we may be certain, that they manufactured other tools, which were absolutely necessary for the completing their domestic works, as axes, implements of husbandry, and the like; but these perhaps were made by the slaves and dependants, to whom the tillage of land was committed, and by whom all servile offices were performed.

This art how supposed to be improved.

What skill the Germans had in the art of working metals, was without doubt, understood by the Saxons, who, on their settling in Britain, where plenty of ore was to be found, could not but improve upon the knowledge of their ancestors. Also, from some of the fugitive Britons, they might learn the readier way of refining metals, and making them fit for use; but this art was brought to the greatest perfection, by the instructions of those artists, who came from Rome with Benedict Biscop, in the latter end of the seventh century.

The plumber's and smith's art.

The plumbers art was well understood by the Saxons, soon after their conversion to Christianity; as is abundantly evident, from the churches and other public edifices being covered with lead, as we have repeated assurances they were. The artificers in iron were much esteemed; every nobleman had his smith, constantly attendant on his person, to fabricate his arms and keep them in proper order.\* The chief smith was an office of great importance in the household list of the Saxon kings. Neither was any capital land-holder without a smith amongst his servants, to take care of the implements of husbandry.†

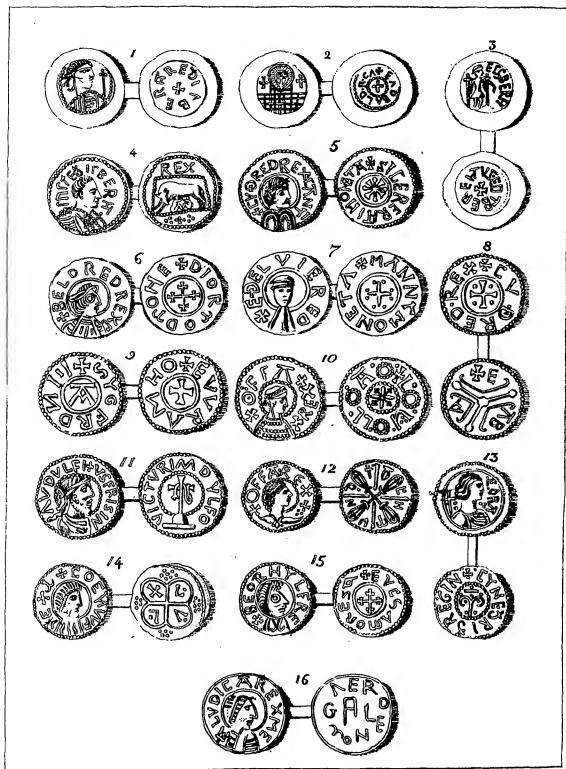
The goldsmith's art.

At the latter end of this æra, that is before the dissolution of the Heptarchy, it seems that other arts less necessary, were cultivated and improved, particularly works in gold and silver; the goldsmiths were first employed in making ornaments for the altars of churches, shrines for saints, and coffers for the preservation of sacred relics; but soon after, the pride and luxury of kings and nobles procured them other business,

\* Wilkin. Leg. Sax. page 25.

† See a preceding note, page 320.

and



and cups for drinking, plates and dishes, with many other things for setting out their tables, as well as variety of ornaments for their persons, were made of gold and silver; the clergy also were apt to run into the same extravagance, for the great quantity of gold and silver plate which Wilfrid bishop of York possessed, excited the envy of others, and was perhaps the leading step to his disgrace.\*

The lapidary's art was not entirely unknown at this period; for we find frequent mention of shrines and other sumptuous pieces of workmanship, ornamented with precious stones: from some curious antiquities that have been discovered, it does not appear that they understood the methods of cutting them into any form, to render them more beautiful; nor do they seem to have been polished so highly, or set with that exactness as at present; but this will be more largely considered hereafter, and some remaining specimens produced.

The coinage of the Saxons is a subject which will require a very particular dissertation; and indeed the whole, from their first beginning to coin money, to the end of the Saxon æra, is so connected, and circumstances depend so much upon each other, that to divide the short sketch, which is necessary to be drawn up on this head, would cause a manifest confusion; because the certain periods in which many alterations took place cannot be ascertained: therefore hereafter, when we complete the history of the Anglo-Saxons, a regular account of their coinage, its weight, its value, its size, and whatever more is necessary for the full explanation of the subject will be given.†

## C H A P. VII.

*Cloathing Arts, and Habits of the ancient Germans and the Saxons.*

IT may appear extraordinary, that a people so barbarous, and little inclined to labour, as the ancient Germans were, should attend in the least to the manufacturing of cloth, when they might so easily supply themselves with garments from the skins of their cattle; but there seems to have been no people, however barbarous, but what were proud of decorating their persons; and though they affected to despise the usages of civiler nations, they would frequently give into luxuries, every way equal, only set forth in a different, and perhaps a more unpleasant style; so that the vice itself is not altered in its tendency, but in its outward appearance; for the same passion for finery, caused the un-

\* Eddii Vit. Wilfridii.

† We have here subjoined plate XVII. which exhibits sixteen different Saxon

coins, which were struck during the Heptarchy. This plate is fully explained in the appendix.

civilized Mæætæ and Calidonians to pounce their skins, and endure a great degree of torture, to bear the representation of various figures upon it, that prevailed upon the inhabitants of more polished nations to wear silks and gold embroidery; and perhaps the same passion, led the barbarous Germans to spinning and weaving, in order to appear at particular times, in such garments as required some skill to make.

The Germans understood how to weave linen.

It is certain, that the Germans used, in very early times, to dress and spin flax, and weave linen cloths; but whether it was, they were jealous of their art being discovered, or whether they were ashamed to have it known that they condescended to labour at the loom, cannot be determined; however all this work was secretly done in vaults and caverns, the manufacturers being buried as it were under ground.\* As they were skilled in the art of making linen cloth, we can hardly suppose, that woollen garments, and other cloths of coarser manufactory, were unknown to them. Their methods of bleaching and softening their linen, as well as the different sorts which they might make, cannot be discovered; nor do we know whether, like the Gauls, they were well acquainted with the arts of dying and colouring cloth, before it was made into garments.

The habit of the meaner Germans.

The meaner sort of people amongst the Germans, such as their slaves and mere dependants, went almost naked, wearing only a cloak called a sagum, which was fastened round their shoulders upon their breasts with a buckle, or if they could not procure that ornament, a sharp thorn:† this garment hung down both before and behind, and reached nearly to the middle of their thighs.‡

The habit of the noble Germans.

The richer sort of people and the princes, were distinguished by their habit, which was a close garment, covering all their bodies, their legs, and their thighs, but in such a manner as to show the whole shape of the wearer; besides this part of his dress, another was adopted, namely, a kind of cloak or robe, made of the skins of beasts; which skins they were very particular in the choice of, and such as were the most difficult to obtain, were received with the greatest approbation; these they ornamented with a variety of artificial spots, to make them more beautiful; and they were much pleased, if they could procure any foreign trinkets to adorn their persons:§ their arms may also be said to have constituted part of their dress, for they scarcely ever appeared without them from the time of their being first permitted to bear them.||

\* Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xix. cap. 1.

† Tacit. de Morib. Germ.

‡ See two figures of this kind represented at a little distance, plate XVIII. of this volume.

§ See the delineation of the noble Ger-

man, plate XVIII. of this vol. the figure on the right-hand of the plate, holding a spear in one hand and pointing with the other.

|| Tacit. de Morib. Germ.



The habits of the women differed but little from those of the men, The habit of a German woman. except that they were usually made of linen, which as it was finer and better woven, was the most esteemed: their garments they would frequently ornament with purple borders, to make them more gaudy. Another peculiarity in the tunic of a woman, was its not having sleeves, so that their arms were entirely bare, and their necks and breasts left open: \* but we must now conceive, that this is the description of the garments of a woman of distinction, those that were poor and of less consequence, without doubt, were clothed in a less elegant manner. †

What covering the Germans wore upon their heads is not recorded: long hair was not honourable amongst the men, because it was the sign of cowardice; for they might not cut or trim it until they had done their country some service by slaying an enemy: on the contrary, the women were fond of their long hair, inasmuch, that it was the highest disgrace to have it cut off. ‡ Neither have we any certain account concerning their shoes; but in the very ancient delineations of the Anglo-Saxons, we find the feet of the nobles covered with a sort of shoes, which seem to be made of leather, and bound round the instep; but the commoner sort of people are unshod and constantly bare legged. §

The habits we have already described, were such as appertained to The habit of the ancient Saxons. the ancient Germans; yet it is highly probable, some slight alterations might take place before the time of the Saxons arrival in Britain. The habit of those piratical Saxons, who infested the British seas, consisted of a tunic, reaching down to their knees, and bound round the waist; their arms were a spear, a shield, and a sword; the two last they usually carried at their backs, when they travelled from place to place; but the most remarkable part of their dress was the adornment of their heads, for after they had shaved their temples and clipped the locks which hung round their necks, the hair upon the crown of the head was permitted to grow as long as it would, and being inclosed within a ring of copper, which raised it from the forehead, it hung down over the ring, reaching to their shoulders. ||

Now we have seen a faint gleam of light thrown upon the art of The manufacturing of cloth improved by the Saxons. manufacturing cloth amongst the ancient Germans, we shall naturally pass on to the Saxons. It is certain, that after their conversion to Christianity, spinning and weaving were greatly improved amongst them; and it is by no means unlikely, that some of those artists who came from Rome with Benedict Biscop, might understand the cloth-

\* See the German woman delineated plate XVIII.

† Tacit. de Morib. Germ.

‡ Ibid.

§ See the plates vol. I. of the *Норда* Angel cýnnan; or the Manners and

Customs of the English.

|| Paulus Diaconus Apol. Sidonii Epist. lib. viii. epist. 9. & Witchindus See this figure delineated, leaning on his spear, plate XVIII. of this vol.

ing art in greater perfection than it was known amongst the Saxons, who instructed by those artists, might proceed to the manufacturing of fine cloths of various kinds. It is certain, that they had silks in Britain at this period, of which the altar cloths were frequently made, and perhaps the garments of the nobility; but we have no evidence that it was manufactured by the Saxons themselves; therefore we shall not place it amongst their cloathing productions. What various kind of cloth they might make cannot be determined; but the price of wool, which was very high, may sufficiently prove the attention which was paid to the manufacturing of this valuable article; nor can we discover the different degrees of fineness of their woollen cloths. As linen was the production of the looms of the ancient Germans, we can have little reason to believe that their descendants, the Saxons, should neglect the fabrication of so valuable an article; on the contrary, a striking proof that it constituted a great part of their cloth manufacture, is its being universally worn by them.

Variegated  
cloths, wove by  
the Saxons.

Besides the weaving of large pieces of cloth of uniform colours, they had the art of fabricating various cloths, for the garments of the nobility, the embellishment of altars, and other particular purposes, in such a manner as to bear the representation of various figures and images, all of which was manufactured in the loom, by the skilful disposition of different threads, of different colours, and each of them used as occasion required.\*

The dying art.

The dyers art must have been well understood by the Saxons, for this was absolutely necessary, in order to colour the threads wherewith they wove their variegated cloth; but what methods they made use of in the process of this art at this period, or the materials which they procured, as well as the perfection of their colours, and their various sorts, cannot be traced out; perhaps hereafter, we may be able to throw some clearer light upon all, or most of these curious particulars.

The habit of the  
Saxon Kings de-  
scribed.

The habit of the Saxon soldiers we have already seen, which consisted chiefly of a tunic, fitting closely to their bodies, that they might not be hindered in their martial exercises, and brandishing their swords, by its largeness or looseness. Sometimes besides this tunic, they had a cloak or robe, which buckled on the right shoulder, and fell over the left arm, covering the trunk of the body before and behind.† The soldiers tunics, we are well assured, were most commonly made of li-

\* Aldhelm, in his book on virginity, makes use of the following simile, which plainly proves the truth of this assertion: "It is not," says he, "the web of one uniform colour and texture, without any variety of figures, that can please the eye and appear beautiful; but one

"that is woven by shuttles, filled with threads of purple and various other colours, flying from side to side, and forming a variety of figures and images in different compartments, with admirable art."

† Vide page 329 of this volume.





nen.\* Not far distant from the habits above described, were those worn by almost all the Saxons; some few instances we have of the cloak buckled on both shoulders, and this seems to be the distinction of some particular rank of men.† The habit of the kings we find much more superb. We have already described the dress in which they went to war; at other times, we find them delineated in long tunics, sometimes reaching down to the middle of their legs, and sometimes to their ankles; these tunics, from their loose and flowing appearance, seem to have been made of fine linen. A figure of a king, represented in a very ancient delineation, drawn by a Saxon artist, is habited in a fine long tunic, with close sleeves reaching to his wrists; over this he wears a large loose gown, which also has sleeves that come a little below the elbows. This gown is not so long as the tunic, for it descends only to the middle of his legs, and at the bottom is ornamented with a broad welt, or border of some fine cloth, of a different colour.‡ Another figure we find habited in a close tunic, not so long as that described before, but with sleeves reaching to the wrists; over this he wears a robe or cloak, which flows equally over either arm, and hangs down as low at the bottom of his stomach, on the fore part, but a great deal lower behind.§ A third figure is delineated in a tunic, exactly like that of the former, only at the end of the sleeves, there appears a sort of pleating like a ruffle: this figure has a large long robe, which buckles upon his right shoulder, and hangs over all his back and left side, like those cloaks which we have already described.||

Every figure designed to represent a king, whether he is in his court, or in the field of battle, has constantly a crown upon his head, by way of distinction: other personages are generally delineated without any covering for their heads; sometimes indeed they wear a cap, which comes close round their heads, gradually decreasing to the top, where it bends a little forward. Their shoes, as has been declared before, seem to be made of leather, left with an opening on the top of the foot, and bound round the insteps: their legs appear to be generally naked, which custom of going bare-legged, was forbidden to the priests who ministered at the altar, by canon made in the council of Chalcuith, A. D. 785.\*\*

We shall not here enter into any further particular description of the dress of the Saxons, because it is most likely, that but few, if any of our authorities, are so ancient as the period we are now treating of. Nor why shall we here take any notice of the apparel of the ladies, because, that will be more properly a subject for future consideration, when we shall be able to produce our authority as we proceed in our discourse.

\* Aleuini lib. de offic. divin.

† See this kind of cloak plate XV. of this vol.

‡ See plate XIX. No. 2. of this vol.

§ See plate XIX. No. 3. of this vol.

|| See plate XIX. No. 4. of this vol.

\*\* Johnson's Canons.

Description of the Saxon habits broke off and

## C H A P. VIII.

*Learned Men, and the state of Learning amongst the Saxons.*

Germans un-  
learned.

WE must not look for learning amongst the ancient Germans; all their knowledge was such as was merely dictated by nature, and was in general bounded by their immediate necessities; it is true, they were improved, and brought from their barbarous state, by a great chief, under the name of Woden, from whom they received the knowledge of letters, which are called Runic; but all these matters will be considered hereafter in the history of the ancient Danes, where proper specimens of this kind of learning will be produced and explained.

The Saxons en-  
emies to learn-  
ing and the life of  
Gildas.

Our Saxon ancestors when they first reached Britain, were not only unlearned themselves, but also great enemies to learning; their whole success depended upon their swords, and the subsequent troubles kept them so fully employed, that had they been inclined to cultivate the knowledge of literature, they could scarcely have found leisure to pursue their intentions for upwards of one hundred and fifty years from the time of their arrival: during which space, there flourished several learned men amongst the Britons; the first in esteem is Gildas Badonicus, surnamed the Wise: he was educated in the monastery of Banchor, and applied himself diligently to the study of the Scriptures: to him we owe the first lights which are cast upon the troublesome times of the Britons, and of the miseries those wretched people suffered by the encroachment of the Saxons. He has left behind him a short history of Britain, and an epistle, in which he heavily accuses the princes and clergy of the Britons, who were cotemporary with him. His style is inflated, and abounds with continual metaphors, and frequent quotations from the Scriptures; throughout the whole, he discovers the strongest marks of zeal, and appears to have been of a gloomy and querulous disposition, taking every occasion to vilify his countrymen, and place their faults in the worst and strongest light; so that from his writings, we should be apt to form but an unfavourable idea of the taste of those times; however his works are extremely valuable to the world, not only on account of their antiquity, but because they give us such information as we cannot meet with elsewhere. Gildas flourished towards the latter end of the sixth century.\*

The life of  
Nennius.

Before we take our leave of the Britons, we will take notice of another learned man, who also received his education in the monastery of Banchor, this was Nennius, to whom we owe a short history of the

\* Vide Bale de Scriptor. cent. I. in vita Gildæ.

Britons,

Britons, and their wars with the Saxons; but the whole is so concise, and so many miracles are crowded into it, that it is no easy matter to separate the truth from fiction: however, there are many very curious circumstances, relative to the times in which this author lived, preserved in his little work. Nennius flourished in the beginning of the seventh century.\*

But to return to the Saxons. It would be in vain to endeavour to trace out the state of learning, whatever it might be, before their conversion to Christianity; some time after which important event, schools and seminaries of learning were established in Kent; these were productive of good effect, which being observed by Sigebert, when he ascended the throne of the East Angles, A. D. 635, he established schools upon the self-same plan in his own dominion. Thus was the door to erudition set open, and soon after this period there flourished a great number of learned men.†

Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, who came over into Britain in the year 669, contributed greatly to the improvement of learning; with this prelate came several professors of science, particularly Adrian, a monk, who assisted him greatly in the instruction of the English youth. These two men are said to have excelled in all the various branches of sacred and civil literature. Theodore also brought over with him into Britain a large collection of books, which were particularly serviceable to his disciples. To the schools set up in Kent under the direction of Theodore, Adrian, and their assistants, resorted a great number of scholars, whom they instructed in the sciences, reading lectures to them on poetry, astronomy, and arithmetic, as well as on divinity, and the sacred scriptures; besides these, they also taught them the knowledge and application of medicine, and established certain rules for the preservation of health, with such observations thereon as they thought necessary to be attended to.‡ Logic and rhetoric were also taught by these preceptors, and diligently studied by the scholars.

Towards the latter end of the seventh century flourished Adhelm, a near relation, if not nephew, to Ina, king of the West Saxons; he received the first part of his education in the school of one Macdulf, a learned Scot;§ after which he travelled into France and Italy for improvement, and at his return home completed his studies under Adrian, the abbot of St. Augustine's monastery, who was at that time the most learned professor of the sciences that had been in England; by which in-

\* Vide Bale de Scriptor. cent. I. in Vita Gildæ.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 18.

‡ But it plainly appears that their physical doctrines were spiced with the superstition of the times: one of the lessons of Theodore is preserved by Bede, and is as

follows: "It is very dangerous to let blood on the fourth day of the moon, because both the light of the moon and the tides are upon the increase." Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 3.

§ This school was established where Malmesbury now stands. Angl. Sacra.

dustry he acquired an uncommon stock of learning and useful knowledge, so that he became famous not only in England, his native country, but also abroad in foreign climates.\* When he was made abbot of Malmesbury, which he himself had founded, he set about the instruction of the people with uncommon assiduity; and being an excellent poet, he composed a great number of little poems, which he would sing to them after mass; and as he had a remarkable fine voice, and great skill in music, he managed his little compositions with so much art, that he at once delighted and instructed his auditors. After Adhelm had been thirty years abbot of Malmesbury, he was made bishop of Sherborn, where he died in the year of our Lord 709.† His chief works, besides his little poems and homilies, are, the book on virginity, dedicated to St. Ethelburga, and his treatise on the celebration of Easter, written against the Britons, by the command of the synod of the West Saxon church. He also left behind him a book of the prosodia of the Latin tongue, in which he was very expert, being the first Saxon that ever wrote in that language both in prose and verse.

The good effect of the schools of Theodore and Sigebert.

The schools established by Theodore and Sigebert, produced several excellent scholars, and many of them of high rank; amongst whom we may reckon Alcfrid, king of Northumberland, and Ina, king of Wessex, both of them men of learning, especially the former, who had been the disciple of Wilfrid, and attained to great knowledge in the sacred Scriptures, as well as in almost every part of moral literature. What contributed also greatly to the improvement of the studious, was, the libraries of books, which began at the latter end of the seventh century to be common in the most noted monasteries, though it is true they bore a great price.‡

St. Cuthbert's gospels described.

About this time, that is, the latter end of the seventh century, Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarn, prevailed upon Ealdfrith, a monk there, to compose an elegant copy of the four gospels, which was done under his inspection, in the most elegant manner that can be conceived; the whole of this book, which is yet extant, is written in Latin, with St. Jerome's preface, and interlined with a Saxon version. When Ealdfrith had completed this valuable manuscript, Bilfrith, a celebrated anchorite, was employed to ornament it in a superb manner;§ before each gospel is prefixed a painting of the evangelist who wrote it,|| and the opposite page is full of beautiful ornaments, enriched with various colours; then fol-

\* Bede draws the character of Adhelm in the following concise manner: "He was a man of universal erudition, his style was elegant and flowing, and he was wonderfully well acquainted with books, both on philosophy and religious subjects." Hist. Eccles. lib. v. cap. 19.

† Anglia, Sacra.

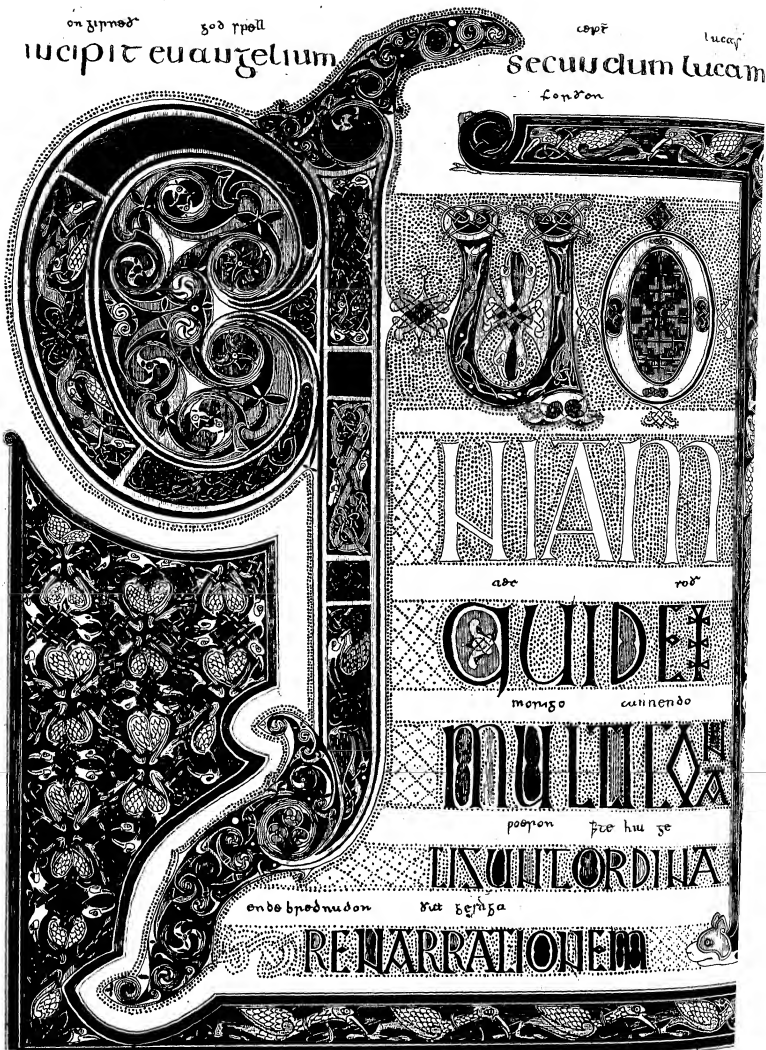
‡ Ibid.

§ See a full account of this valuable MS. in the catalogue of the Cotton library, or in the preface to Casley's catalogue of the royal library.

|| These figures, which have nothing to recommend them but their antiquity, are faithfully copied in the third volume of the *Hopba Angel cynnan*, or *Manners and Customs of the English*.

on gipneth  
god rphell  
incipit euangelium

copy  
lucag  
secundum lucam  
London



UO

HUIUSMODI

QUI DE

MULTA

IN ORDINE

RENARRATIONEM

lows the commencement of the gospel, the first page of which is most elaborately ornamented with letters of a peculiar form, and very large, which displays at once the zeal of the performer, and the taste of the times in which the book was written.\*

In the beginning of the eighth century flourished Tobias, bishop of Rochester, who in his younger years had begun his studies at Glastonbury, but finished his education at Canterbury, under Theodore and Adrian, where he became a great proficient in all the parts of learning, whether civil or ecclesiastical. He was also well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues;† he wrote several books, though his works are now unhappily lost.

But the most learned man of this age was Bede, a presbyter, commonly called the venerable Bede; this great man was born at Weremouth, in Northumberland, A. D. 672, and received his education in the monastery of St. Peter, founded at that place, about two years after his birth, by Benedict Biscop, who was one of the most learned men, and the greatest traveller of that age.‡ Bede had the advantage of an excellent library, which was superior to any existing in Britain at his time; and also the benefit of the best preceptors, as abbot Benedict, and his successor, Ceolfrid, and St. John of Beverley; he made a rapid progress in all kinds of learning, so that at the age of nineteen he was ordained a deacon by John of Beverley, at that time bishop of Hagulfstad, (or Hexham;) about which time he left Weremouth, and went to the monastery of St. Paul, at Jarrow, near the mouth of the Tyne, and then newly founded by Benedict; here he spent the remainder of his life in the offices of devotion, teaching, reading, and writing. At the age of thirty he was ordained priest, by John of Beverley, above which dignity he was not advanced: yet although he lived thus obscurely, mured up in a little corner of the island, his fame spread abroad, not only throughout all Britain, but in France and Italy, insomuch, that pope Sergius sent for him to consult with him concerning a dispute which had arisen at Rome, about some ecclesiastical matters;§ however, he did not go to Rome, on account, perhaps, of the death of Sergius, which happened soon after he had written the above letter. Bede died at his cell at Jarrow, in a devout manner, May 26, A. D. 735, in the sixty-third year of his age.|| Both ancient and modern authors have bestowed the highest encomiums upon the learning of this great man; amongst his contemporaries he was called the learned Saxon, but by posterity the venerable Bede. His works are many, making eight large volumes folio, the principal of which is his Ecclesiastical History of the

*Life of Tobias,  
bishop of Ro-  
chester.*

*The life of  
Bede.*

\* One of these curious pages, with the initial letters, is given plate XX. of this volume. The writing is explained in the description of the plates given at the end of the volume.

† Bede, Hist. Eccles. lib. v. cap. 23.

‡ Biograph. Britan. in Vit. Bedæ.

§ Malmſbury, lib. i. cap. 3.

|| Vide Biograph. Britan.

Anglo-Saxons, consisting of five books, from whence the more perfect part of our early history is formed; his other works are, the lives of saints, treatises on the holy scriptures, and philosophical tracts.\* The greatest blemish that clouds the works of this learned man, is his credulity; for he easily gave into the popular stories of miracles and wonders, which at this time were propagated most plentifully in every part of the island; and though, it is true, they were no more than religious juggles, yet they were conformable to the taste of the people, and sincerely believed by them of almost every rank and denomination.

Other learned men amongst the Saxons.

After the death of Bede, learning decayed in Britain; for a short time, it is true, it was upheld by some few of his friends, who survived him; amongst whom was Acca, bishop of Hagulfstæd, (now Hexham) who excelled in church music, and his knowledge of ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, which he acquired at Rome, to which place he went for improvement;† also Egbert, archbishop of York, who founded a noble library at York, and was a great encourager of learning.‡ Nor ought we here to forget Alcuinus, a Saxon, born in the northern parts of Britain, who received his education at York, under the direction of archbishop Egbert; he was sent by Offa, king of Mercia, on an embassy to Charlemagne, and became the tutor of that great prince, instructing him in rhetoric, logic, mathematics, and divinity: in short, such was the love which the scholar bore to the preceptor, that Alcuinus never returned to Britain again, but remained at the court of Charlemagne,§ at whose desire he wrote several books against the heretical opinions of Felix, bishop of Argel, in Catalonia, in defence of the orthodox faith; which he performed so well, that he not only pleased his employer, but even convinced the heretic of his errors, who afterwards renounced them publicly, and returned to his former faith. Alcuinus died at the abbey of St. Martin, at Tours, A. D. 804.¶ Besides his several epistles, Alcuinus left behind him a poetical history of the bishops of York.\*\* Several other learned men flourished also during the eighth century; but as they were not so famous as those we have already mentioned, we have no room to insert their lives in this place, as we can only pretend to give a concise and general history of learning in each particular period.

The light but faint which is thrown upon the learning of the Saxons.

Thus we have seen the early dawn of literature amongst our Saxon ancestors; the history of which we shall pursue hereafter, with great care and circumspection, through all its various states, and endeavour to set in as clear a light as possible the extent of their knowledge in every particular science. This cannot be done at present, lest, as we are, in the

\* A complete list of all the works of Bede is given by Dr. Henry, in the Appendix, vol. II of his History of Britain.

† Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 20.

‡ Alcuinus de Pontific. Eboracen.

§ Another reason why he would not return to Britain, might be the troubles

which followed in all the several kingdoms of the heptarchy, and the great decay of learning.

¶ Vide Leland de Scriptorib. Bale, &c.

\*\* This poem is printed by Gale, in his Hist. Script. Britan. XV. printed A.D. 1691, in folio.

dark;





dark ; but as we advance in the history, most of these interesting particulars will be discovered, and then by comparison we may be able to form some idea of the more early times.

It is impossible to discover all the physiological opinions of our ancestors, and more especially those which they had imbibed at this distant period ; nor shall we pretend to investigate how far they were acquainted with the doctrine of atoms, and their properties, the laws of gravitation, or their ideas of light or colours, because we have no certain guide to lead us through these abstruse studies. As they received the greatest part of their learning from France and Italy, we may very fairly suppose their opinions in philosophy were nearly, if not exactly, the same with those established on the continent.

Their astronomical knowledge we may be better able to ascertain, because, in an old manuscript on this subject, yet extant, written partly in Latin, and partly in Saxon, we meet with a great variety of delineations, representing the figures depicted by the ancients in the celestial sphere ; and on each figure is marked the stars which were said to belong to them. This curious production has unhappily been mutilated by some sacrilegious hand, so that scarcely more than half the drawings now remain.\* At the end of the book is preserved a general view of the whole celestial sphere, included in one large circle ;† as this is extremely curious and valuable, we shall be the more particular in describing of it :— In the middle is placed the lesser bear, partly encompassed by a large serpent ; below it, upon the tail of the serpent, the greater bear is delineated ; above the serpent, is Hercules with the lion's skin, the crown, the harp, and the swan ; on the right side of the serpent stands Cephus, and on the left side Bootes, or the herdsman ; above the figure of Hercules is the dolphin, the arrow, and the eagle ; immediately over the swan is the head of the Pegasus, or winged horse ; under the Pegasus, by the side of the swan, stands Andromeda naked ; between Andromeda and Cephus sits Cassiope, with both her arms extended ; a little lower down we see Perseus holding the head of Medusa, and under him, close to the greater bear, is Erichonius, having in his right hand a whip, or scourge, and in his left an animal, intended for a goat ; near his left foot is another animal, like that he holds in his hand : all these figures are surrounded by a double circle, in which are represented the twelve signs of the zodiac. Here we find three things remarkable ; virgo, or the virgin, is represented with wings ; libra, or the balance, is held by a man in his right hand ; and on the scorpion stands a man holding a serpent with both hands, which is twined round his body ; without the second circle of the zodiac we see the ship Argo ; above that the hydra, represented as a large serpent, on whose back is placed the crater, or

Several philosophical notions of the Saxons unknown.

The celestial sphere described, as drawn by a Saxon artist.

\* This curious manuscript is preserved in the Harleian library at the British Museum, and is marked 647.

† See plate XXf. of this volume, which is a faithful copy of the drawing here described.

goblet,

goblet, and the crow; towards the top is the centaur Chiron; at the top is the altar; passing round we come to the greater fish, the dragon, and Orion, whose left foot is placed upon a large urn, which Idanus empties, forming a long stream of water; near the right foot of Orion, is the hare; a little above, between Orion and the ship Argo, are the two dogs, the greater and the less; and directly under them is an inscription, which informs us, that we owe the delineations contained in the book, and the discourse which accompanies them, to the labour and industry of a presbyter and monk, named Geruvigius; of what date the manuscript itself is, cannot be determined; but from the hand in which it is written, and every outward appearance, it must have been very ancient; perhaps as early as the beginning of the ninth century.

The mundane  
system of the  
Saxons.

In the self-same manuscript of Geruvigius is also preserved a delineation of the mundane system;\* the earth is placed in the midst, about which all the planets make their rotation at unequal distances, which are given as follow:—From the earth to the moon is 15,515 miles; from the moon to the planet Mercury is 7,757 miles and a half; from Mercury to Venus is the same distance as from the moon to Mercury; from Venus to the sun is 23,272 miles and a half; from the sun to Mars, 15,515 miles; from Mars to Jupiter is 7,757 miles and a half; from Jupiter to Saturn is the same distance as from Mars to Jupiter; from Saturn to the fixed stars is 23,272 miles and a half; so that the whole distance from the earth to the fixed stars is 108,605 miles.† It may not be unpleasing to the reader to compare these ancient calculations with those of the moderns, infinitely more certain, and nearer to truth.

## C H A P. IX.

### *The State of the Polite Arts amongst the Saxons.*

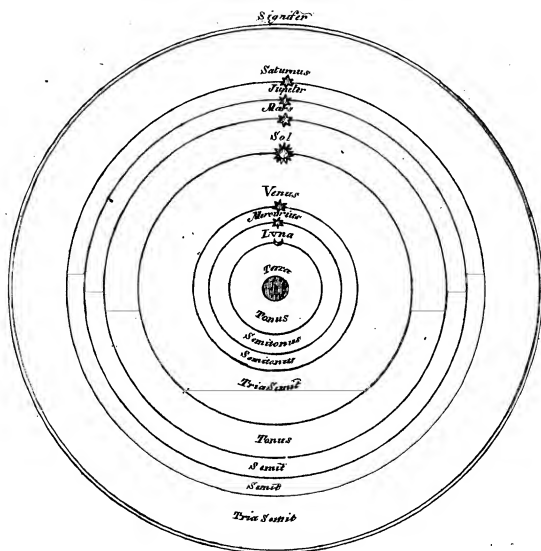
The Germans  
had some little  
notion of scul-  
pture.

THE polite arts, as well as learning, had scarcely entered the ideas of the ancient Germans; of course we can have little to say concerning them. Sculpture they seem to have had some faint ideas of, because they are said to have carried certain little images before them to battle, which they had taken from their consecrated woods and sacred

\* See plate XXII. of this volume.

† We must here observe, the measures on the plate are as in the original plan, divided into the *tonus*, the *semi-tonus*, &c. One *tonus*, the author informs us, con-

tained 135 *stadium*, or measures; and each *stadium*, or measure exactly 115 miles, so that it is easy to determine the number of miles, according to this scale, which we have done in the above description.



places;\* and it is certain that their descendants, the Saxons, had images of the idols which they adored set up in their temples;† but in what manner they were executed is a circumstance we can by no means determine. Sculpture was improved, without doubt, by those artists who came over into Britain with Benedict Bishop; for we soon hear of images, and variety of other ornaments, set up in churches, and admired for their elegance.

Painting, and the arts of design, we hear not of amongst the Saxons before, nor indeed until some time after their conversion to Christianity. This art, if not introduced by the painters who came over with Benedict Bishop, was at least improved by them; and the Saxons did not want proper models to imitate, for Benedict, after he had built the church of St. Peter, at Weremouth, brought images and pictures from Rome, with variety of other curious ornaments, to adorn it. A picture of the Virgin Mary, together with pictures of the twelve apostles, he hung up in the body of the church; the south wall he decorated with pictures of the gospel history; and the north wall with other pictures, representing the visions of St. John, in the Apocalypses:‡ also when he had dedicated the church of St. Paul, at Jarrow, he brought over other ornaments and pictures from Rome. He covered the walls of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, at Weremouth, with the whole gospel history; and the church of St. Paul he decorated with pictures of the concordance of the Old and New Testaments, which were executed and disposed with singular art and propriety; as, for example, the picture of Isaac bearing the wood whereon he was to be sacrificed, and another of Christ bearing the cross whereon he was to be crucified, were placed close to each other: in like manner, Moses lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, adjoining to another representing the lifting up of the Son of Man upon the cross.§ The earliest painters were employed chiefly, if not altogether, upon making ornaments for the church.

In a little time after, we find them decorating books with pictures, on which they frequently bestowed the greatest pains and labour. The most ancient, and at the same time the most elegant, manuscript of this sort, is the four gospels which we have before described;|| but if we may judge of the taste of the times from the figures of the evangelists which are therein delineated, we shall not think so favourably of it, because they are by far the worst part of the ornaments of the book, though, without doubt, much admired at the time in which they were done: these figures are out of all proportion, and drawn in a rude stile; the drapery is stiff and

The art of painting.

Drawings by way of ornaments to books.

\* Tacit. de Morib. Germ.

† We find them particularly mentioned by Boniface, bishop of Rome, to Edwine, king of Northumberland. Bede, Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 10. Bede expressly says, that Coisa overturned the altars, and

broke down the images in the great temple at Godmundham, near York. Bede, lib. ii. cap. 13.

‡ Bede Hist. Abb. Weremuthen.

§ Ibid.

|| Vide page 346 of this volume.

unnatural,

unnatural, without the least idea of grace in the disposition of the folds; and the stools, or benches, on which they are seated, are falsely drawn, without any knowledge of perspective.

The ancient MS. ascribed to Cædman, at Oxford.

The next specimen of the art of design amongst the Saxons, is said to be the paraphrase on the book of Genesis, preserved in the Bodleian library at Oxford, which some have ascribed to Cædman, and suppose it to have been written and ornamented towards the latter end of the eighth century; others again have imagined that it was not the work of Cædman, nor indeed quite so ancient as that time: as the date cannot be ascertained, we shall defer the account of the delineations to the next volume, where we shall have occasion of mentioning this manuscript again. A very early specimen of the state of this art amongst the Saxons is exhibited in the celestial sphere, above-described.\*

Poetry.

Poetry is thought to have been much cultivated by the Anglo-Saxon kings, who are said to have had their poets attending upon them, to sing their praises, and celebrate their actions. This we shall be easily led to believe, when we see hereafter the great respect in which the scalds, or poets, were held by the Danes. Adhelm, who flourished (as we have seen before) towards the latter end of the sixth century, was an admirable poet, and his works were much esteemed, not only by his contemporaries, but also in after times; for, upwards of two hundred years after his decease, he was esteemed the best Saxon poet, and a favourite song composed by him, was then sung, and greatly admired.† After him, amongst others, Cædman, a monk in the abbey of Streanshalch, is particularly noticed, who was a man of obscure birth, and but of little learning; yet the sublime strains of poetry were so natural to him, that he composed verses in his sleep, which he repeated when he awaked.‡ This happy genius for poetry he improved, and principally employed his talent on religious subjects, which, by these pleasing decorations, became more striking to the auditors, and were longer retained in their memories.

Music.

Amongst the musical instruments used by our Saxon ancestors, the harp was the most admired; to which the poets usually would sing their poems, and by a happy mixture of the voice with the tones of the instrument, make them delightful to the auditors. They had also at this period, various other instruments of music, as the organ, the violin, the atola, the psaltery, the trumpet, the tabor, the pipe, and the flute;§ but it is impossible to discover their shapes, or the manner in which they were played, not only because the authors who have mentioned them have neglected to give any description of them, but also because we

\* See page 349 of this volume.

† Anglia Sacra.

‡ Bede gives a Latin translation of the exordium of one of these poems, which, he confesses, falls far short of the beauty of the original, which is itself preserved in the Saxon version of Bede, of Elfred; and

is deservedly admired by all who understand the Saxon tongue. This poem, with a literal translation, as well as various specimens of the Saxon language, will be given in the second volume.

§ Bede de Arte Musicae.

have no drawings that can positively be declared to be so ancient as the eighth century, that contain the delineations of any musical instruments; however, this much we may assert, the organ, mentioned above, was composed of a certain number of pipes, of different lengths and sizes, and blown into by the mouth, something after the form and fashion of the Pan's pipe, made of reeds of unequal lengths.\*

Music and singing were introduced into the Saxon churches soon after their conversion to Christianity; for John, the archantor of St. Peter's, at Rome, and abbot of St. Martin's abbey in that city, was, at the request of Benedict Biscop, sent over into Britain by pope Agatha, about the year 678, to teach the monks of Weremouth, and others of the Saxon clergy, the art of singing the public service. This John, immediately on his arrival in Britain, taught the monks in Benedict's monastery; and also all other persons, who had any taste for music, came thither from every monastery in Northumberland, and put themselves under his care. Besides this, he taught in several other places, whither he was invited; he also left behind him written directions for singing the service throughout the whole year, which were preserved for a considerable time afterwards.† Church music soon after was publicly taught in the schools at Canterbury, from whence professors of music were sent to all the different parts of Britain; but such as were desirous of attaining this art in the highest perfection, went to Rome.‡

## C H A P. X.

*Particular Manners, &c. of the ancient Germans and the Saxons.*

THE face of the country in Britain suffered a material and a dreadful change after the departure of the Romans; the flourishing towns and villages which that people left behind them were ruined and destroyed; their gardens, orchards, and cultivated lands, were left desolate and neglected; and every place exhibited the fury of merciless conquerors, and bore the horrid marks of war and rapine. The Scots and Picts were the first who began this ruin, and the stern uncivilized Saxons those who completed it.§ Long did the land continue in this wretched state, till the Saxon arms had completed the conquests, and then by degrees improvements and cultivation took place throughout all the kingdoms of the heptarchy. After the conversion of the Saxons to Christi-

\* The figure of these organs, from ancient delineations, will be given in the second volume.

† Bede, lib. iv. cap. 18.

‡ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 20.

§ Gildæ Hist. & Epist.

anity, their minds became more open to the refinements of taste, and cities, towns, palaces, monasteries, and stately churches, rose out of the ruins of those deserted by the hapless Britons.\*

The persons of  
the Saxons.

The persons of the Saxons are described as very strong and robust, yet they were still more remarkable for the elegance of their shape, the fairness of their complexion, and the fineness of their hair; their strength and stature they derived from their ancestors, the Germans, who are universally said to have been men of large limbs; the Germans had yellow hair, and grey fiery eyes, which might also be common amongst the Saxons, their immediate descendants. They could not endure much labour; they were easily overcome by heat and thirst, whilst they could bear hunger and cold with great patience; to these they had been inured by the poverty of their country, and the sharpness of the climate.† The Saxons were in general long-lived; this proceeded from their simple living, and constant exercise.

The character  
of the Saxons.

Many of the Saxons have left undoubted proofs behind them of a great genius, and a strong natural understanding; their character, it is true, as given by the monks in general, is very unpleasing, and often shocking and barbarous; but we must consider it as drawn by a set of gloomy bigots, who always laid hold of the failings of their contemporaries, and overlooked their virtues, and who were too apt to censure the community for vices which prevailed amongst a few individuals. Notwithstanding all this religious outcry of the priests, we find them possessed of many excellent and amiable qualities.

The piety of the  
Saxons tinged  
with supersti-  
tion.

They were, in general, after their conversion, much inclined to piety; which, however, was strongly tinged with superstition: this frequently produced a fondness for the monastic life, by which means the community was deprived of several of its valuable and important members; and this preposterous zeal was constantly encouraged by the priests, especially if the parties were rich, and any great benefits were likely to be the result. Another kind of enthusiasm prevailed amongst them, which caused them to undertake extraordinary pilgrimages, in order to visit the shrines of saints, and see remarkable places that were reputed holy: this blind zeal naturally produced a great love and veneration for the reliques of saints, so that rotten bones, old nails, bits of rusty iron, tattered pieces of garments, and such kind of trash, were as highly prized by the Saxon devotees, as silver and gold are by the misers of the present age; and, without doubt, they were frequently made the dupes of the more cunning priests, who vended this rubbish at an extraordinary price.‡

Love of liberty.

The great characteristic, both of the Germans, and their descendants, the Saxons, was their love of liberty. All those brave warriors who came into Britain under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa, and the other

\* Chap. II. part V. of this Chronicle.

† Tacit. de Morib. Germ.

‡ See pages 234, 236, & 237, of this volume.

Saxon chiefs, were free and independent men; and though they permitted their generals to assume the name of kings, for their own honour and better security, yet they were jealous of their privileges, and retained to themselves the right of making laws, imposing taxes, and determining important questions relative to the state, by common consent, in the national assemblies.

Valour was highly esteemed amongst the Germans and the Saxons; every stimulus was used to prevent cowardice, and every encouragement given to the brave and hardy warrior. Courage was esteemed by them as the most noble attribute of mankind, and endeared them, as they thought, to the powers above, whom they supposed would never forsake the valiant man. After the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, valour decreased amongst them, greatly owing to the foolish infatuation of many of their chiefs, and most powerful men, who suddenly quitted the world, as though it were impossible to serve their God and their country too.\* This was one main reason, though another, and perhaps a still more powerful one, might be the increase of luxury, and their fondness for idleness and dissipation.

The Saxons were famous for their social dispositions, and formed themselves into fraternities and guilds of various kinds, having frequent convivial meetings with each other; nay, even by the Saxon laws every freeman, and head of a family, was obliged to be a member of the decennary, or neighbourhood, where he dwelt; and all the members of that neighbourhood were pledges for each other's good behaviour in public:† these prudent regulations kept up a close connection in each community, which formed, as it were, a little state of their own, under the laws and protection of the nation in general. They had also frequent voluntary meetings and societies, some of the clergy, and some of the laity, which all tended to strengthen the ties of love and friendship amongst them; though, it is true, they often contributed to the promotion of excess and drunkenness, a vice they were all of them too apt to fall into.

Their curiosity was equal to their credulity; these were the palpable failings of the Germans and their descendants: as the former prompted them eagerly to enquire into all kinds of matters, the latter led them to a belief of all that was told them; this is abundantly evident in the various impostors and juggles which were put upon them by the priests, under the names of wonders and miraculous events. Before their conversion to Christianity they used to practise a great variety of methods of soothsaying and augury;‡ nay, their ordeals, by which solemn appeals to

Z z 2

Heaven

\* Bede himself, though a priest, foresaw the fatal consequences of this superstitious folly, and accordingly inveighed against it.

† Wilkin's Leg. Sax.

‡ Soothsaying and lots (says Tacitus, speaking of the Germans) they observe above all other nations; their custom of casting lots is as follows:—They cut a branch from a fruit-bearing tree, and divide.



Heaven were made, were still retained for a considerable time after they had embraced the true faith.

Their hospitality.

For hospitality the Germans are justly famous; they were not exceeded in the bountifulness of their dispositions by any nation in the whole world; for amongst them it was an act of the greatest baseness for any one to debar another his house, or refuse to entertain him according to his ability. Their doors were constantly open, and a stranger was received with as hearty a welcome as if he were an intimate acquaintance; he was entertained by the person who first received him, until all his store was consumed, and then he was conducted to the next house, where, though uninvited, he was received with like welcome, and taken care of until he chose to depart; and if before he went away he demanded any thing of them, it was freely bestowed upon him.\* Nor did the Saxons after their establishment in Britain deviate from the rules of their venerable ancestors; their kings spent a large part of their revenues in the entertainment of strangers, and feasting their own nobility and attendants; their hospitable disposition was also increased, rather than diminished, by their conversion to Christianity; for the clergy were commanded by the canons to make ample provision for the needy, and to persuade all other people who were able to do the like.†

Their chastity.

Amongst all the virtues of the ancient German people, none are more conspicuous than their chastity; fornication and adultery were crimes scarcely ever heard of amongst them;‡ and in general, especially at the early period we are treating of, the Saxons seem to have carefully supported the character, so justly attributed to their ancestors. It cannot be denied, that some few instances of incontinency are set down in the annals of the heptarchy, but they are chiefly confined to the great and powerful; and for those few examples we will not too hastily condemn a whole people.

vide it into many pieces, all of them distinguished by a separate mark; these are cast upon a white garment in a promiscuous manner, and if it be a matter that concerns the general state, the priests, or in private matters, the master of the family, having prayed to the gods, looks stedfastly towards Heaven, taking up every one of the lots separately three times, and maketh his determination according to the marks as they succeed each other. If the lots fall not auspiciously, they consult no more that day about the same affair; but if they do, they will try other methods, for they observe the singing of birds, and their flight, by both which they consult

their gods. It is a thing peculiar to the country to make presages from the neighing of horses, bred and maintained in the woods, which were generally white, and unbroken to the reins; these being harnessed, and put to a sacred chariot, are permitted to go whither they will, and the priest, or the prince, follows them, carefully observing their noise and neighing. Of all presages, this is of the greatest credit with the priests, noblemen, and common people, thinking themselves ministers of the gods, and the horses privy to their secrets, &c. Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

\* Tacit. de Morib. German.

† Johnson's Canons.

‡ Tacit. de Morib. German.

A peculiar fondness for their parents and love for their relations, Their fondness for their parents and relations. seems to have prevailed amongst the Saxons and their ancestors: it was ever held a most atrocious crime to murder a relation, or even to hurt him wilfully. The brothers or sisters children were as much esteemed and beloved in their uncle's house as that of their father's; for the greater number of relations a man had, the greater was the respect and honour which was paid to him; and so it was, if any person offended one of this little community, he was accounted an enemy to them all; so on the contrary, every one who did any one of them a kindness, was respected and beloved by them all.\*

One of the greatest blemishes upon the character of these people, Their proneness to robbery. was their proneness to robbery and plunder, which they always encouraged rather than discountenanced, so it was done out of their own state; by this means, (for they hated all rural labour) they frequently procured their food; nay, the Saxons seem chiefly to have supported themselves by their piracies: the youth were permitted to tread the same steps with their fathers, because they might be early inured to war, and kept out of sloth and idleness, to which they were very much given, inasmuch, that when they were not engaged in any war, nor out at the chase, they would lie in their beds late, and sit whole days over their fires, made on the hearth before them.†

Our Saxon ancestors upon their first arrival, were rude and unpolished Their address & behaviour to the fair-sex. in their address; they were also choleric, and apt to revenge injuries, but by no means implacable in their dispositions: this truth their very laws may prove; by which even murder was forgiven, on compensation being made to the friends of the deceased. The respectable behaviour of the Saxons, as well as of their forefathers, towards the fair-sex, is deservedly noted; the latter especially, would consult their wives upon any important occasion, and listen attentively to their advice, esteeming something sacred to be in them, and a knowledge of future events.‡

The marriage ceremonies amongst the ancient Germans, were such Marriage ceremonies of the Germans. as well agreed with the Genius of the people: when the marriage was concluded upon amongst the friends, the young couple were brought together; and the friends of the bridegroom presented him with a pair of oxen yoked together, a horse with furniture, a shield, a sword, and a lance; to the bride also arms were presented; which they looked upon as the titular deities of matrimony; these arms the bride and bridegroom exchanged with each other: this done, a speech was made to the bride, putting her in mind, that she was now become the companion of her husband, to share with him in his labours and dan-

\* Tacit de Morib. Germ.

‡ Ibid.

† Ibid. &amp; Cæf. Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

gers, and that she was also to suffer the same hardships with him, whether in peace or war, and run the same hazards; for that was the meaning of the two oxen yoked together, as also the horse with his furniture, and the reason why arms were reciprocally received on either side; thus she was to live chastly and faithful to the day of her death, and deliver up her gifts unviolated to her children, which were afterwards again bestowed upon their wives, and looked upon as sacred reliques: the wife gave no dowry to the husband, on the contrary, the husband gave to the wife; and the parents and near kinsmen were always present whenever any gifts were made by the new couple, from the one to the other. The wife had always the care of her children, and suckled them from her own breast; for it was held disgraceful amongst them, for the mother to put her child away to be suckled by a nurse or strange woman.\*

Funerals of the  
Germans.

The ancient Germans seldom made any very pompous funerals: the body of the deceased person was usually taken and laid upon a pile of wood; and with the corps was constantly placed his arms, and sometimes his horse; the pile being set on fire, and the whole consumed; the ashes were usually raked up in a heap, and over them was raised a mound of earth or turfs.† This, in the early ages, seems to have been all the monument they had; but in after times, their funerals were more magnificent, and the tombs were frequently ornamented with great stones. At the period above described, the only difference between the funeral of a nobleman and a common man, was, the pile of the former being made of a choicer sort of wood. Tears and lamentations for the deceased, his relations soon forbore, though they might secretly mourn his loss. It was thought becoming the women to weep for the dead, and for the men to remember them.‡

\* Tacitus de Morib. Germ. & Cæf. Bel. Gal lib. vi. The ceremonies of marriage, as used by the Anglo-Saxons, are deferred to the next volume, where as full an account as can be procured will be set down.

† In plate XV. the reader will find a representation of four of these artificial tumuli or barrows, which are composed of earth, thrown up to a considerable height, and gradually decreasing towards the top; the largest is about one hundred and twenty-four yards round and twenty-six high. These barrows are in a field in Essex, near Bartlow, upon the borders of Cambridge-shire. They are said to have been erected by the soldiers in Canute's army, after the great battle fought between him and Edmund Ironside, at Ashendon; but there

is great reason to believe that this is not true, because in all probability, and indeed according to the authority of the Scala Chronicle, that battle was fought at Ashendon, near Rochford, many miles distant from this place: these are likely very ancient; Holingshead mentions one of them being opened, and there were found "two bodies in a stone coffin, one lying with his head towards the others feet; and many chains of iron, like the water-chins of the bits of horses, were found in the same hill." See his Chronicle, vol. I. page 256.

‡ The funerals of the Saxons after their conversion to Christianity, are purposely omitted here, because a full account of them will be given in the second volume.

As amongst the ancient Germans it was counted honourable for a prince to have a great number of followers;\* so amongst the Saxons, servants and retainers added greatly to the state and magnificence of their kings, and were besides a proper guard for his person. Great trains honourable.

The diet of the Germans was plain and simple; it consisted chiefly of wild apples, fresh meats, and curds or cream.† As to the diet of the Saxons, particularly in their more improved state, towards the latter end of the Heptarchy, we need not say much; for as they were at that period well acquainted with all the various arts of hunting, hawking, fishing, pasturage, and agriculture, they were well provided with all the variety of food which those arts could procure, and which may be as easily conceived as described. The tables of the kings and noblemen abounded with the greatest plenty of all kinds of provisions. Their diet.

Their cookery consisted chiefly in three kinds, roasting, broiling, and boiling; and all these appear to have been done in a plain, simple way; for they do not seem to have any idea of rich sauces and gravies, the bane of the constitution; by way of sauce, perhaps, they had herbs and all the kinds of garden stuff, known at that time. Their cookery.

Their drinks were chiefly ale or mead; these they received their knowledge of from their ancestors the Germans: they had but little wine, and the greatest part of what they got was imported from the continent; but of all these liquors they were extremely fond, and would frequently drink to great excess; so that their convivial meetings were seldom closed without a quarrel, in which some of the parties were often hurt, and indeed frequently slain.‡ Their drinks; & excess in drinking.

Before they sat down to meat, it was usual with the ancient Germans to wash, and generally in warm water,§ which was esteemed a kind of luxury; and was afterwards improved by their descendants, who were fond of hot baths, and frequently used them; on the contrary, the cold bath was extremely disagreeable, inasmuch, that it was often enjoined them by the priests as a severe penance.|| When the Germans had washed, they instantly sat down to the table, and every man had his own stool, and a separate dish containing part of whatever the banquet might consist of. Some traces of this custom we shall evidently discover hereafter, in the most ancient Saxon delineations.\*\* Manner of sitting at meat.

The diversions of the Saxons were of three kinds; as martial exercises, the sports of the field, and domestic amusements, all of which they received from their ancestors: the first of these was the practice of arms, which every one was early taught: amongst the Germans, young men were used to strip themselves naked, and dance and leap between swords and lances, set up round about; and this they Their diversions

\* Tacit. de Morib. Germ.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

|| Johnson's Canons.

\*\* Tacit. ut sup.

would

would do with the greatest dexterity : the second kind were the sports of the field, as hunting, hawking, and the like ; to which a great part of their leisure time was constantly dedicated : the last consisted chiefly of gaming, for which the Germans had such an irresistible passion, and would play at dice so eagerly, that when they had lost their all, they would lay their persons and liberty upon the last throw ; and he who was overcome, entered into a voluntary servitude, though he were both older and more powerful than the winner,\* and suffer himself to be sold like a slave. It is true, the Saxons, their descendants, do not seem in general to have gone such great lengths in gaming, yet we have evident traces in ancient history of their fondness for this pernicious amusement.

\* Tacit. ut sup.

END OF THE FIFTH PART OF THE CHRONICLE.

APPENDIX.

# A P P E N D I X.

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE PLATES.

I. **A** Map representing all the British nations, and where they were situated, according to Ptolomy's Geography rectified.

II. The north-east view of Stone-Henge, representing the grand entrance.

III. Rolrich in Oxfordshire, a large circle of stones, with a ruined cromlech near to it. Also a view of the cromlech, called Kets Coity-Houfe, near Aylesford in Kent, the monument of Catigern, the British prince, the brother of Vortimer, slain by the Saxons, A. D. 455. See page 66 of this vol. and a large cromlech at Lanyon,\* in Cornwall, taken from Borlafs's history of that county.

IV. Coins of Cunobelinus, divided into six classes: see the note, page 270.

V. Figures of the ancient Britons, as described by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Julius Cæsar, Dion Cassius, and Herodian.

VI. A Roman encampment, according to Polybius; and a Roman camp at Plushey in Essex.

VII. A perspective view of part of the south angle of the wall of the Roman city of Silchester, with some Roman soldiers in the foreground, from the Antonine column.

VIII. Plan of Silchester, with a perspective view of the ampitheatre, and a piece of the fourth wall upon a larger scale.

IX. A map of the Roman stations in Britain, according to the itinerary of Antoninus. Note, the nine forts erected by the Romans on the south-east shore against the Saxons (see page 268) are represented by stars.

X. The plan of Castle Bavord, an entrenchment thrown up by Elfred the Great, about a quarter of a mile from Sittenbourne, in Kent. On the same plate is represented another entrenchment, called Castle Ruff, made by Hasting's, the Dane, barely half a mile from the former.

XI. A view of a Saxon entrenchment, with the appearance of the face of the country during the Heptarchy, according to the ideas of

\* Vide Borlafs's Hist of Cornwall.

the author. The tents within the entrenchment, and the figure on horseback, are from a Saxon manuscript in the Cottonian library, at the British Museum.\* The figure leaning on the shield is from an ancient manuscript in the Harleian library, also at the British Museum.† The figure walking forward with a spear, is from a very ancient Saxon book (supposed by some to be the work of Cædman, the poet: see page 352) preserved in the Bodleian library at Oxford.‡

XII. Tong Castle in Kent, built by Hengist, or his son Æsc.

XIII. Plan of the same castle.

XIV. Six Saxon soldiers; the first five are from an ancient Saxon MS. in the Cottonian library,§ and the sixth holding his shield upon the ground, is from another Saxon MS. in the same library.¶

XV. Saxon husbandmen at work, with a view of the large artificial hills or barrows, near Bartlow, on the borders of Essex. The plough and figures attending it are from the MS. of Cædman, at Oxford, mentioned above; the harrow and the man attending upon it, is from the tapestry at Bayeux.\*\* The two front figures are from a Cottonian MS. before mentioned; of these, the elderly man bears a short staff in his hand of a very peculiar form; this figure in the original is designed to represent the steward of a nobleman's household.

XVI. Saxon ships; the middle one seen entire, is from a MS. in the Harleian library; and the other two from a MS. in the Cottonian library:†† both these MSS. are mentioned before.

XVII. A plate of Saxon pennies; the first six were coined in Kent: No. 1. is a coin of Ethelbert, the first Christian king of the Saxons, and to whom the first coinage of Saxon money is attributed. No. 2. a coin of Edwald. No. 3. one of Egbert. No. 4. one of Ethelbert the Second. No. 5. one of Cuthred. No. 6. one of Balred. The two next numbers were coined in Wessex; No. 7. is a coin of Ethelheard; and No. 8. one of Cuthred. The two next following were struck in Eastsex; No. 9. is a coin by Speed, attributed to Sighere: No. 10. is one of Offa, No. 11. is a coin of Adulf, king of the East-Angles. All the rest were coined in Mercia: No. 12. is a penny struck by Offa. No. 13. a coin of Cynethrith (or as she is oftener called by historians Quendrida) Offa's queen. No. 14. is a penny of Ceolwulf. No. 15. one of Beornwulf. No. 16. one of Ludecan.

XVIII. Ancient Germans, as described by Tacitus. An ancient Saxon (the figure leaning on his spear) as represented by Sidonius, Apollinaris, Paulus Diaconus, &c.

\* Marked Claudius B. IV.

† No. 603. see the Harleian catalogue.

‡ Marked Junius XL.

§ Claud. B. IV.

|| Marked Vitellius C. 3.

\*\* Vide Monarch. François par Mon-faucon.

†† No. 603. Claud. B. IV.

XIX. Figures of Saxon kings: No. 1. a monarch in a warlike habit from an old MS. in the Cottonian library;\* the other three kings are from another MS. in the same library, mentioned before.†

XX. A curious page in an old Saxon MS. of the Gospels, preserved in the Cottonian library:‡ at the top is written, *Incipit evangelium secundum lucam*. The following writing is thus: *Quoniam quidem multi conati sunt ordinare narrationem*. It is interlined with the Saxon translation of the same, and may be thus Englished: *The beginning of the gospel according to St. Luke*. Then follows: *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration, &c.*

XXI. The celestial sphere, according to the ideas of the Saxons, taken from a curious MS. in the Harleian library.§

XXII. The Mundane system of the Saxons, preserved in the same MS. as the preceding number.||

\* Marked Tiberius B. V.

† Claud. B. IV.

‡ This MS. is marked Nero D. IV.

§ No. 647.

|| Ibid.



A TABLE, containing a general Reference to all the  
Kings of the Heptarchy.

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9 Ceolred or Celred	ibid.	18 Ludecan	ibid.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

# E R R A T A

- Page 1. line 10. leave out the word *now*.  
 3. line 18. for *Cæsar's ship* read *Cæsar's ships*.  
 6. line 15. for *battles* read *bodies*.  
 17. line 24. for *names* read *manis*.  
 21. the first marginal note, for *Aulus Didius* read *Verannius*.  
 33. line 1. for *wander* read *wandered*.  
 Ibid. for *are* read *were*.  
 35. Note \* for *into the Genounia* read *into Genounia*.  
 59. line 10. for *Aremorica* read *Aremorica*.  
 80. line 10. from the bottom, for *he was shot* read *Lothair was shot*.  
 Ibid. line 5. from the bottom, leave out the word *thus*.  
 83. line 6. after the word *ETHELBERT* add (*the Second*.)  
 92. line 7. for *part of the Ciffas* read *part of Ciffas*.  
 102. line 25. for 593 read 592.  
 121. line 24. for *Herefordshire* read *Hertfordshire*.  
 122. line the last, for *Osmy* read *Osweo*.  
 125. marginal note, for *A. D. 746*. read *A. D. 823*.  
 142. line 15. for 653 read 633.  
 Ibid. line the last, for *and had* read *who had*.  
 Ibid. for *Ostrida* read *Ostrid*.  
 143. line 3. for *the bishop* read *archbishop of Canterbury*.  
 169. line 15. for *East-Angles* read *East-Saxons*.  
 191. line 23. for *Paidis* read *Faids*.  
 269. line 26. for *that* read *which*.

# DIRECTIONS for the BINDER to place the PLATES.

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THE  
CHRONICLE  
OF  
ENGLAND;  
OR, A  
COMPLEAT HISTORY,  
CIVIL, MILITARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL,  
OF THE  
ANCIENT BRITONS AND SAXONS,  
FROM THE  
LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR IN BRITAIN, TO THE  
NORMAN CONQUEST.  
WITH A  
COMPLEAT VIEW  
OF THE  
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IN TWO VOLUMES.  
BY JOSEPH STRUTT.  
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M.DCC.LXXIX.

## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE reader has already been informed, in the preface to the former volume of this work, that the intention of it was (by way of supplement) to give information concerning those times wherein the preceding histories of Great Britain have been defective, and for this reason it ends with the accession of William the Conqueror to the Crown; and the author hopes, that the history of our British and Saxon ancestors, which have been so much neglected by former writers, will here be found set forth in as clear a light as the imperfect materials for such a work would permit.

In the course of the work, no less than forty-two copper plates are given, which explain and illustrate the history of the manners and customs of the Britons, and the Saxons, which part in particular of this work no pains has been spared to make as complete as possible; and the author presumes, the many curious and authentic particulars relative to the dress and particular customs of those our early ancestors, contained in these volumes, cannot fail of being pleasing, as well as highly interesting, to an English reader. And in this volume is added an account of the coinage of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and a complete

pleat series of their coins, from Egbert to Harold the Second inclusive.

The author now takes his farewell of the public, to whose candour he submits his work, desiring they will kindly overlook the errors they may find in it; and hopes the perusal of it may afford them at least some amusement.

Duke Street, Portland Chapel,  
April 20, 1778.

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# CHRONICLE

O F

## ENGLAND.

### PART I.

*From the Accession of EGBERT to the Arrival of WILLIAM the CONQUEROR.*

WE left the history of Wessex unfinished in the former volume, Introduction to the hist. of Egbert. in order to pursue, in a regular channel, the accounts of the other kingdoms which composed the Heptarchy. The kingdom of Wessex being left destitute of an heir by the death of Beorhtric, the nobles unanimously agreed to send messengers to France, to invite Egbert (a young nobleman \*, who had quitted Wessex, his native country, and retired into exile) to return and take possession of the crown. This summons was exceedingly agreeable to Egbert, who had left Britain only on account of the jealous disposition of Beorhtric, which made his stay there unsafe. He had taken refuge in France under Charles the Great, where he acquired that knowledge in civil and military government, which laid the foundation of his future glory. Egbert, complying with the request of the West Saxons, came over into Britain with all possible expedition, and was received with the loudest acclamations of joy, and crowned king by universal consent. A. D. 804.

\* Egbert, according to the ancient chronicles, was of the blood royal of Wessex, descended from Cenred, the father of Ina, king of Wessex, as Florentius the monk of Worcester derives his pedigree. Cenred had two sons, Ina and Ingils, whose son was Eoppa, whose son was Eafa, whose son was Alkmund the father of Egbert.

## E G B R Y H T, or E G B E R T,

*The seventeenth KING of WESSEX, and first sole MONARCH of the HEPTARCHY\*.*

A. D. 804.

Egbert subdues  
the Britons in  
Cornwall.

**E**G BERT was no sooner seated on the throne of Wessex, than he endeavoured to secure the hearts of his people, by his prudent government, and strict administration of justice. Thoroughly sensible of the miserable effects of indolence in a nation, he trained his subjects to arms, and restored proper discipline among them. His first wars were against the Britons inhabiting Cornwall and Devon, which commenced soon after he ascended the throne, and continued some time with various success, though Egbert generally proved victorious. At length, in a campaign, made about the year 809, he proved so successful as to reduce all Cornwall to an entire subjection †.

A. D. 818.

Another expe-  
dition against  
the Cornish Bri-  
tons.

In the fourteenth year of his reign, he took the field against the Western Britons, with a powerful army over-ran their country, and subdued them from the most eastern to the most western parts of their possessions; so that, for a considerable time, they quietly submitted to the will of the conqueror ‡.

A. D. 823.

The Britons a-  
gain overcome.

However, about the year 823, they began to be weary of their yoke, and endeavoured to shake it off. They began by commencing hostilities in the West; but the West Saxons, who inhabited the borders of Devonshire, collected a considerable body of troops, and marched against them. Both armies met at a place called Gafulford §, when a bloody battle was fought with such equal success, that neither could claim the victory. However, the power of the Welsh received so considerable a shock from this battle, that they dared not to take the field again ||.

The battle of  
Sceandune.

The great success of Egbert soon excited the jealousy of the neighbouring princes, especially of Beornwulf, king of Mercia, who, with-

\* Historians in general have agreed in placing the coronation of Egbert under the year of our Lord 800; and, indeed, that year is expressly set down in the chronicle of Ethelweld, and also in the Saxon chronicle, as well as in several other ancient authors; but some mistakes must be in dates.—The Saxon chronicle places the death of Cuthred, king of Wessex, A. D. 754, which could not be, for Edwald, king of Mercia, was not slain until the year 757, in a battle fought against this Cuthred at Sceandune; and we have the authority of several authors, that Cuthred fought with the Britons after the battle of

Sceandune, so that he could not have died before the latter end of the year 757, or, which is more probable, the beginning of the year 758. After him Sidgebryth reigned near one year, Cynewulf at least thirty, and Beorhtic full sixteen; so that the death of this last prince could not have happened before the year 804, in which very year it is probable Egbert mounted the throne of Wessex.

† Malmsh. lib. 3. cap. 1.

‡ Hen. Hunt. lib. 4.

§ Camulford in Cornwall.

|| Chron. Sax. sub ann. 823.

out any apparent provocation, entered the borders of Wessex with a powerful army, and proceeded as far as Ellendune\*, where he was met by Egbert. Here a bloody engagement ensued, when Beornwulf was defeated, with the loss of the greatest part of his army †.

The victory obtained by Egbert at Ellendune was not the only pleasing consequence he derived from that battle, since it opened his way to the conquest of the neighbouring kingdoms, of which Mercia was the most powerful. Egbert, having properly secured the fruits of his conquest, sent his son Ethelwulf with a powerful army into Kent, which soon submitted to his victorious arms. For Baldred, the king of that province, after the loss of one battle, fled out of Kent, and left his subjects to shift for themselves, who, seeing themselves abandoned by their leader, laid down their arms, and submitted to the conqueror, who passed through their territories, and crossing the Thames, entered Essex, which kingdom he also presently subdued, and chased their king Swithed from his throne and country ‡.

Kent and Essex  
subdued.

Mercia, already distressed and weakened by the loss of that fatal A. D. 824. battle at Ellendune, soon felt the effects of Egbert's success---for the East Angles, whose territory Offa had unjustly seized upon after the murder of Ethelbryhte, and added to his own dominion, thought the present opportunity the most favourable for them to break their allegiance with the Mercians, and revenge the injuries they had received. They, therefore, sent petitions to Egbert, requesting his assistance, which they easily obtained. Strengthened with this powerful alliance, they commenced hostilities against the Mercians, invaded their territories, and drove them to the greatest distress. Beornwulf vainly sought to oppose the torrent which was daily increasing; his forces gradually grew weaker, and after some time fighting in the defence of his falling country, he was slain on the field of battle §.

Egbert aids the  
East Angles a-  
gainst the Mer-  
cians.

After the death of Beornwulf, the Mercians elected another prince, A. D. 825, named Ludican, who, like his predecessor, was slain the following year fighting against the East Angles; and was succeeded by Wiglaf, a prince of the royal blood of Mercia, who took upon him the government, and exerted every ability he possessed to save his country from ruin ||.

The death of  
Ludican.

Egbert, not contented with the advantages he had already gained, A. D. 827. raised a powerful army, and marched against Wiglaf, the king of Mer-

Mercia and  
Northumber-  
land subdued.

\* Wilton near Salisbury.

§ Ibid. Ibid.

† Malmib. Hen. Hunt. Chron. Sax. &c.

|| Ibid.

‡ Ibid. Ibid.

cia, whom he defeated, and routed with such great loss, that he dared not appear again in the field, but withdrew himself, not only from the pursuit of the conqueror, but also from the knowledge of his own people. This victory was fatal to the Mercians, who were now compelled, by necessity, to submit to the arms of Egbert, who marched through Mercia with his army in order to invade Northumberland, which, at this time, was in the utmost disorder, torn with civil discords and divisions amongst the chief rulers, and afflicted with continual intestine oppressions. In such a condition, they were unable to resist the powerful arms of Egbert, who was hastening towards them; they therefore sent ambassadors to meet him as soon as he was advanced to Dore in Yorkshire, and submitted to him without trying the fate of a single battle\*.

A. D. 828. Egbert, in the beginning of the year 828, returned from Northumberland, and entering Mercia, restored Wiglaf to the throne, after he had been reduced to the condition of a private man, if not to that of an exile, having passed four months of his absence in a cell belonging to his cousin Etheldrida at Croyland †.—It is uncertain whether Egbert was induced to act thus through pity for the unfortunate man, or whether it was the better to please the Mercians with the appearance of a king of their own. Indeed, it was but in appearance, for Wiglaf at best was but little more than a viceroy under the conqueror.

Wiglaf restored to the throne of Mercia.

Egbert's expedition into North Wales.

The same year Egbert marched with a powerful army into North Wales; for their having assisted their southern brethren was a sufficient plea for directing his arms against them. After several bloody battles, which generally ended in favour of Egbert, the whole kingdom of North Wales was subdued; and the Welsh were entirely driven out of their great city of Caer Legion ‡. The Welsh, however, made repeated struggles to regain their liberty; but by the vigilance of Egbert, all their endeavours were prevented, and their attempts only contributed to make their oppressions the greater; for Egbert, incensed at their obstinate resistance, enacted a severe law against them, whereby they were forbidden, on pain of death, to pass the dyke which Offa had formerly made to divide the kingdom of Mercia from the possessions of the Welsh §.

Egbert takes upon him the sole monarchy.

Egbert, after all these successful undertakings, returned to Wessex, where he applied himself to the regulation and prudent government of the conquered kingdoms; and some time, about this period, he caused himself to be crowned king of the whole Heptarchy, which

\* Ibid.

† Ingulphus Hist. of Croyland.

‡ Or Caer Leyon, West Chester.

§ Some authors say this law was owing to the council of Red-burga, the wife of Egbert.

was done with great pomp at Winchester; and he then gave the name of England to all his dominions\*.

About four years after Egbert's return to Wessex, the Danes (who had first shewn themselves in Britain, about the year 793, during the reign of Beorthric, the predecessor of Egbert) landed in the island of Shepy, where they miserably destroyed the country, and pillaged the inhabitants; nor were they driven from thence without much difficulty.-----The same year, or early in the beginning of the next, another party of these pirates arrived in thirty-five ships, and began to ravage the western parts of the kingdom, against whom Egbert hastened with his army, and came up with them at a place called Carrum †, where a bloody and obstinate battle was fought, which proved very unfavourable to the English, for two of the chief captains in their army, Dudda and Osmond, besides two bishops, Herefrid of Winchester, and Wigfrid of Sherbourne, together with a prodigious number of common soldiers, were left dead on the field; for the Danes proving victorious, pressed so closely upon the English that they were put to flight, Egbert himself escaping with difficulty under cover of the night ‡.

The Danes land in England, and the battle of Carrum.

Two years afterwards, a strong party of the Danes landed in West Wales, and united their forces with those of the Britons, who gladly embraced this opportunity of revenging themselves upon the English. These two armies, therefore, began to pillage and destroy the borders of the dominion of Egbert, who, in the mean time, was not idle, but collected a powerful army, and marching forward to meet the invaders, came up with them at a place called Hengestdune §, where a bloody battle was fought, in which the Danes, and their confederates, were defeated with great slaughter.

The Danes join the Britons, and are overcome by Egbert.

Either the first or second year after this victory was gained, Egbert appears to have again attacked the Danes, and to have put them to flight with considerable loss, after a very bloody battle; but the place where the two armies met is not recorded ||. From this time, to the end of this monarch's reign, we do not find that any thing further happened to disturb his repose.

Another battle against the Danes.

\* He caused commission (says Hollingshead) to be directed forth into all parts of the realme, to give commandement that, from thence forward, all people inhabiting within this land should be called *Englishmen*, and not *Saxons*, and the land should be called England, by one general name ----though (adds he) it should appear that it was called so shortly after the first time

that the Angles and Saxons got possession thereof. Hol. vol. 1. fol. 204.

† Near the river Carr in Dorsetshire, Milt. Hist. Eng. p. 224.

‡ Simon Dunelm: Hen. Hunt. lib. 4. Mat. West. Chron. Sax. sub ann. dom. 833, &c.

§ Or Hengist's Hill.

|| Mat. West. sub. an. 836:

Egbert,

The death of  
Egbert.

Egbert, after he had reigned six and thirty years in greater glory than any of his predecessors, bid adieu to this world, and sought a refuge from all his troubles in another.----His death is said to have happened the fourth day of February, in the year four hundred and forty, and his remains were interred, with great solemnity, in the cathedral church at Winchester.

The person and  
character of  
Egbert.

This prince, as we are told, was but of a middling stature, but his limbs were strong, and well proportioned. He was of a lively and cheerful disposition, valiant in the field, and wise in council, possessing every requisite to render him a great general, and a perfect statesman. His unbounded ambition is clearly evident from his great undertaking, in which he was particularly fortunate, losing only one battle, (that which he fought against the Danes at Carrum) amongst the numbers to which his various expeditions led him\*.

The wife of  
Egbert.

The wife of Egbert was named Red-burga; but the parentage of this lady is not recorded.----She was, by a law made amongst the West Saxons, (on account of the wicked Eadburge, who poisoned her husband Beorhtric, king of Wessex, as we have already observed†) deprived of the title and honours of a queen. Some, however, have not spared to affirm, that she had a great ascendancy over the mind of her husband, and that the severe law made against the Britons, as above related, was at her instigation‡. By Red-burga, Egbert had issue two sons and one daughter.

The issue of  
Egbert.

Ethelwulf, the eldest son of Egbert, was, in his infancy, committed to the care of Helmeftan, bishop of Winchester, by whom he was educated with the greatest circumspection, and trained up in learning and virtue; nor were martial exercises, or such knowledge as was necessary to render him fit to take upon him the command of armies, neglected, as may be witnessed by the conquests he obtained in his father's life time, both in Kent and Essex. This prince succeeded his father in the kingdom.

Athelstan, the younger son of king Egbert, was, by his father, deputed vice-roy over the conquered provinces of Suffex, Kent, and Essex §, which he valiantly defended against the insurrections of the Danes, as we shall have occasion hereafter to observe.

Edgitha, the daughter of Egbert, was brought up to a monastic life. After the decease of her father, her brother Ethelwulf committed her to the care of Modervina, a religious devotee in Ireland, who was much reputed for the holiness of her life.--She afterwards built a nunnery at Polleworth in Arden, on the north border of Warwick-

\* Florent. Worcest.

† Vol. i. page 119.

‡ Johan Bever.

§ In various charters which are yet remaining of Ethelwulf's, this prince, (his

brother,) has subscribed his name as a witness ---An original one is preserved in the Cotton Library, where he has signed himself † Æthelstan Rex. This book is marked Augustus 2, and the charter is No. 25. shire,



shire, upon a spot of ground which her brother Ethelwulf gave her for that purpose, and herself became abbess there, where she died, and was buried.---Her sanctity of life was such that she was fainted after her death, and the place was called (by corruption) from her name, Saint Editha's of Pollesworth.

ÆTHEL



conduct of a valiant chieftain, named Vulfheard, who coming up with the Danes, defeated their army after a bloody encounter, and put them to flight with prodigious slaughter. In the mean time, another party of the Danes had landed at Portsmouth, against whom Æthelwulf dispatched another of his principal officers, named Æthelhelm, at the head of the people of Dorset. A sharp engagement ensued between the two armies, in which the Saxons at first had the superiority; but the Danes (being reinforced from time to time) at last prevailed, and drove their opposers from the field with the loss of their leader, and a considerable part of their army\*.

The great success of the Danes in their last attempt made them still more audacious in their undertaking, so that the following year they came over into England in greater numbers, and at a place called Merefware, engaged with an army of the Saxons conducted by a chieftain named Herebryht. After a sharp conflict, the Saxons were put to flight with the loss not only of their leader, but also of the greater part of their army. These fortunate beginnings seemed to open so fair a prospect of future success, that other companies of these invaders were continually coming over into England. A strong party of them landed at Lindsey, whilst others over-ran the kingdom of the east Angles; and a third body landed in Kent, where, like an irresistible torrent, they bore down every thing before them, plundering the country, burning the towns, and wantonly murdering the miserable inhabitants †.

Animated by the victories already obtained, they returned again the following year with their armies considerably reinforced, and landed on the borders of Kent, meeting with but little resistance. They penetrated further into the heart of the kingdom than they had heretofore done, and destroying the country round Canterbury and Rochester, they continued their destructive march even to London ‡.

Æthelwulf, who in the mean time had been greatly harassed by the frequent and various invasions of these free-booters, gathered a large army together, and the following year marched against their combined forces, who landing from a fleet of thirty-five ships, had advanced as far as Carrum. At this place another severe engagement ensued, in which Fortune still favoured the attempts of the Danes; and the Saxons, after an obstinate resistance, were driven out of the field, whilst their adversaries maintained the ground they had gained §.

*Fresh attempts of the Danes.*

*The Danes pursue their conquests.*

*The battle of Carrum.*

\* Chron. Sax. sub an. 837.

† Chron. Sax. &c. &c.

‡ Ibid. ibid.

§ Id. ibid.

A. D. 845. The people of Somersetshire, about two years afterwards, under the conduct of Eanwulf, a valiant chieftain, and assisted by Eastan, a bishop, and Ofric, another leader, at the head of an army from Dorsetshire, marched against the Danes, and falling suddenly upon them, obtained a complete victory. The Danes, flying from the field, were pursued as far as the river Pendridan \*. So little did the Danes expect this sudden attack, and so considerable was their loss, that despairing of being able for the present to make head against the Saxons, they withdrew from the southern parts, which seem, for near the space of six years, to have remained undisturbed by these lawless invaders.

A. D. 850. About this time, various parties of the Danes landed in the northern parts of the island, and pillaged the neighbouring counties, especially Northumberland, whose inhabitants heavily felt the cruel oppressions of their savage invaders †; but unhappily, the accounts which are handed down to us of these transactions are so very obscure, that nothing regular or certain can be discovered, not even the succession of the rulers; for though a variety of names are found in several historians of kings and chieftains, yet the time they assumed the direction of affairs, or over what part of the province they presided, is very uncertain ‡. The inhabitants of Northumberland were at this time divided amongst themselves, and governed occasionally by rulers of their own choosing, who were suddenly advanced to their dignity by one party, and as suddenly displaced when another prevailed. By these intestine discords their country was left open to the attacks of the common enemy, the Danes, who improved every opportunity that promised success.

A. D. 851. The year after the commencement of these troubles in the north, the Danes returned again to the south, and landed in Wessex. The alarm was no sooner given of their arrival, than the inhabitants of Devonshire, with earl Ceorl at their head, advanced against them, and in a bloody battle (which was fought at a place called Weganbeorche) the Danes were put to flight with prodigious slaughter §. About the same time, another party of the Danes, who with a fleet of ships had infested the sea coasts of Kent, were also defeated by Æthelstan, king of that province, assisted by his general Ealchere. In this encounter the Danes lost, not only a great part of their army, but also nine of their ships, which were taken by the Kentish men. This victory was obtained near Sandwich; but such is the negligence of the early historians, that it is impossible to say whether the battle was fought by sea or land ||.

\* Chron. Sax. Ethelwerd H. Hunt. &c..

† S. Dunelm.

‡ Vide Holinghead, vol. 1. fol. 202.

§ Chron. Sax. an. 851.

|| Henry Huntingdon & Rog. Hoveden; indeed, both of them have it "navali prælio," but the Saxon authors are silent upon this head.

Shortly after this action, Æthelstan, king of Kent, the eldest son of Æthelwulf, died, and was succeeded in his government by Ethel-<sup>The death of Æthelstan, king of Kent.</sup> bryht his brother, the second son of Æthelwulf.

The two important victories obtained this year against the Danes, prevented not a continuation of their invasions; for not long after their last defeat, a strong party of them, in fifty of their largest ships<sup>\*, Further disturbances from the Danes, and the battle of Oclef.</sup>, entered the mouth of the Thames, and made excursions as far as Canterbury, which they destroyed, and from thence proceeded to London, which shared the same miserable fate †. Beorhtulf, king of Mercia, collected what forces he could, and made head against the Danes; but being overcome in a bloody battle, he fled, and left the kingdom to the mercy of the conquerors, who soon after crossed the Thames into Surry, and proceeded as far as Oclef. In the mean time, Æthelwulf (who had been employed in raising forces to oppose the Danes) had now collected a very powerful army, and being informed of the motions of the enemy, so ordered his marches, that he came up with them on their arrival at Oclef. In this place, a long and bloody battle was fought between the two armies, in which Fortune so far favoured the Saxons, that the Danes were totally overthrown with such prodigious slaughter as had never before been experienced.

After this defeat, the remnant of the Danish army, who escaped the carnage, fled before the conquerors, and sought refuge in the isle of Thanet, where they abode the whole winter. This is observed by ancient historians to have been the first winter they remained on this island, having been accustomed to quit it at the approach of that season, and return to their native lands ‡. Whether it was through fear of being intercepted by the Saxons in their course, or the shame of returning with the ignominy of such a considerable defeat, cannot be determined. However, their spirits were so much dejected by so great and unexpected a loss, that they were fearful of recommencing the war with the Saxons till they were forced to it in their own defence, as will hereafter appear.

Beorhtulf, king of Mercia, who was driven from the kingdom by the Danes, as has been already related, reigned (substitute for Æthelwulf) eleven years, during which time he does not appear to have performed any actions of consequence worthy of being recorded.----He had a queen whose name was Sæthryth, and a son named Berhtic §.

C 2

After

\* Thus says the Saxon chronicle. Ælfred (in vit. Ælfredi, fol. 1.) declares, there were 350, with whom Ethelwerd agrees; though Huntingdon and Hoveden say 250, but on what authority may be doubted.

† Ethelwerd, &c. Chron. Sax. sub an. 851.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub an. 851. Ethelwerd, Hunt. Hoveden, &c.

§ This appears from an old charter of Beorhtulf's, dated 845, in which his queen and son sign their names thus:

† Þgo Sæþryþ Regina,

† Berhtic fil. Regir.

The

**A. D. 853.** After the expulsion of Beorhtulf, and the conquest of the Danes at Ocley, Burhred was appointed by Æthelwulf to the government of Mercia under him. Two years elapsed before any appearance of war called the Saxons to the field; but in the year 853, the Britons of North Wales (who had so long continued inactive) began to make incroachments upon the territories of Burhred, who, by the advice of his council, implored the assistance of Æthelwulf, that he might be in a condition to take the field immediately, and by suddenly attacking his enemy, gain a decisive victory, which would secure the repose of his kingdom. Æthelwulf complied with the request of Burhred, and personally led his army into Mercia, where, being joined by the forces of the Mercians, he opened his campaign against the Britons with such success, that they were speedily brought under subjection, and peace again restored\*.

The Danes overcome.

Whilst Æthelwulf was thus employed against the Britons, Ealchere (the general who assisted Æthelstan against the Danes in the battle which was fought at Sandwich, as before related) with a large army of Kentishmen, joined by Hudda, another chieftain, at the head of a powerful reinforcement from Suffex, attacked the Danes, who still remained in the isle of Thanet, and obtained a dear-bought victory, great numbers having fallen by the sword on both sides, besides many who perished in the waters†.

Æthelwulf marries his daughter to Burhred.

Æthelwulf, soon after his return from Wales, gave his only daughter Æthelswitha in marriage to Burhred, king of Mercia. The marriage was celebrated at Chippingham in Wiltshire, where Æthelwulf then abode. Not long after this marriage, Æthelwulf sent his son Ælfred, a child of five years of age, to Rome, accompanied by a noble retinue, where Ælfred was consecrated king by Pope Leo‡.

The Danes remove to Sheppey.

Towards the latter end of the year, the Danes, who had not yet recovered their strength, left the isle of Thanet, and, for the first time, made their abode in the isle of Sheppy§.

**A. D. 854.** The prejudices of a Monkish education very strongly affected the mind of Æthelwulf, who, in the year 854, dedicated the tenth part of the revenue of his own lands, and those of his subjects, to the use of the clergy, who were, at this time, exempted from all military ser-

The clergy exempted from taxes, and military services.

The charter is preserved in the Cotton Library, in a book marked Tiberius, A. 3. Speed gives this king another son, whose name he calls Berefred, and says he was the cause of the martyrdom of St. Wyllan. Speed Chron. fol. 253.

\* Chron. Sax. sub an. 853. Simon Duneim. &c.

† Chron. Sax. ut sup. Aferius, Hen. Hunt & Hoveden say, that both the English leaders were slain—others are silent upon that head, but declare the victory remained doubtful.

‡ Chron. Sax. &c.

§ Ibid. ibid.

vices or taxes of any kind. In return for these misplaced bounties, the clergy were obliged to say masses, to make continual prayer for the welfare of the king and his nobles, and to implore heaven to enable them to vanquish those lawless enemies who were daily infesting the kingdom\*.

Some time after, Æthelwulf, thinking that this proof of his religious zeal was not sufficiently conspicuous, undertook a journey to Rome, attended by many of his nobles. He also took with him his young son Ælfred, then but lately returned to Wessex from his first journey. Æthelwulf, and his retinue, being well received at Rome, they continued there a year at least; during which time he repaired the English school which had been founded there by Offa, the great king of the Mercians, but was now falling to decay. He also performed several other pious acts; and in return for the kind reception he met with from the Pope, he caused a penny to be collected from every house in his dominions to be sent yearly to Rome, partly for the use of the Pope himself, and partly for other religious purposes†. It is also said, that he paid yearly three hundred marks to the Pope, to be disposed of in the following manner: one hundred for the lights in the church of Saint Peter; another hundred for the lights in the church of Saint Paul; and the other hundred for the use of the Pope himself.

Æthelwulf's  
journey to  
Rome.

Æthelwulf, after he left Rome, returned home through France, and stopped some time at the court of Charles the Bald, who then reigned there. During his stay in France, he fell in love with Judith, daughter to Charles, to whom he was married with great pomp. Some time after the celebration of the nuptials, Æthelwulf returned to his own dominions, having been absent full two years‡.

A. D. 855.  
Æthelwulf mar-  
ries the daugh-  
ter of the French  
king.

While Æthelwulf had been thus employed abroad, Æthelbald, his eldest son, joined by some powerful noblemen, had formed a dangerous rebellion at home. The chief abettors of this treason were Ecg- stan, bishop of Shireborn, and Eanwulf, earl of Somerset. Upon the return of Æthelwulf to Britain, the rebellious party took the field, and appeared in arms against him. They, however, endeavoured to cover their revolt with some shew of justice, alledging that Æthelwulf had

The rebellion  
of Æthelbald.

\*Vide W. Malmsh. de gest. Reg. Angl. *seculares services par prestres & vestir le poveres et pas ala a Rome & dona a sein pere chefcun an de chefcun meism dengletere i denier hs lon apele denier sein pere ces fu celi ke primes dona la don chefcun an treis centz. Besanz a Rome sun cent a seint pere a luminarie - lautre a seint Pol -- le tierz a la Poisselle.* This is from a M. S. preserved in the Cotton Library marked Galba E. 3.

† The pennys thus collected were after called Romefcof, or Peter Pence—and was first granted by Offa to be gathered throughout Mercia. Æthelwulf therefore renewed and extended this self same grant. An old French chronicle, said to have been written by a monk of Canterbury, contains as follows: "*Cist Æthelwulf dona la dune bids de tute Westsexe a deu franche equite de tut*

‡ Chron. Sax. &c.

taken his youngest son abroad, and caused him to be consecrated and crowned king, to the prejudice of Æthelbald, to whom the crown of Wessex belonged by birthright---moreover, that in his return to his own kingdom he had married a foreign woman, and brought her home with him; and, contrary to the established law of Wessex, had conferred on her the title of queen, and placed her upon the throne\*. ---This rebellion had a most alarming appearance, for the whole kingdom was divided in their interests, some siding with the father, and some with the son; but, at the time when both parties seemed ripe for actual war, this terrible cloud, which threatened the ruin of the state, dispersed, and that without the least fatal consequences; for Æthelwulf, who was naturally of a mild and peaceable disposition, rather than hazard so destructive a war, pacified his rebellious son by ceding to him a considerable part of his dominions †.

A. D. 858. Æthelwulf died two years after his return from Rome, and his body was enterea with great solemnities in Winchester cathedral ‡. Æthelwulf was a man of mild and amiable disposition, naturally more inclined to peace than to war; yet when his country's safety rendered it absolutely necessary for him to take up arms, he led his armies to the field, and, by his own personal valour, set an example worthy the imitation of his followers. The mistaken notions he had imbibed in his youth from a monastic education, often led him into a wrong system of politics, and so far engaged his attention at last, that following the fashionable superstition of the times, he neglected the more material business of the state.

The death and character of Æthelwulf.

Æthelwulf had two wives; of which the first was Osburga, the daughter of a great officer in the court of Æthelwulf §, named Oslac, who is said to have been a descendant from the family of Stuf and Witgar, two Saxon noblemen, nephews to Cerdic first king of Wessex, who settled in the isle of Wight ||. By this lady Æthelwulf had four sons ¶, Æthelbald, Æthelbryht, Æthered and Ælfred, who all successively

\* Concerning this law, and the reason why it was made, see page 119, vol. 1. of this work. --- Carte says concerning this matter, that Æthelwulf gave offence to the children of the first marriage, who either did not like their step-mother, or were alarmed at some ceremonies, such as anointing her with oil, and putting a crown upon her head: ceremonies not yet adopted in the English ceremonial, but used by Hinomar, archbishop of Reims at her marriage. --- Carte's general Hist. of England.

† Aferius says, all the western, as well as the best part of his dominions.

‡ Speed informs us, that he was buried first at a place called Stamry, where he died, but was afterwards taken up, and reburied in Winchester cathedral.

§ "Famosi pincerna Reg. Edelwulf," Sim. Dunelm.

|| See page 95 & 97. vol. 1.

¶ Speed from Copgrave makes mention of a fifth son of Æthelwulf's, named Neote, who, adds he was, in his youth, brought



cessively succeeded to the throne. He had also by Osburga a daughter, Æthelwitha, who was married to Burhred, king of Mercia, as hath been already mentioned. The second wife of Æthelwulf was Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, king of France, a lady of great beauty, but by him she had no issue.

brought up at Glastonbury; and afterwards proved a man of great learning in the university of Oxford, founded by his brother Ælfred; from thence he went to Cornwall, where he founded a monastery, which was after his decease called Neotestock. When he died, his body was entombed with great solemnity in the county of Huntingdon, at a place then called Amilsebury, but after St. Neot's in honour of him. Speed's Chron.

Æ T H E L-

## Æ T H E L B A L D.

*The third Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 858. **Æ**THELBALD, who by rebellion in his father's life time, had possessed himself of the larger and better part of his dominions, at his death succeeded to the whole. Soon after he ascended the throne, he married Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald, who had been his father's wife, which incestuous action, in open violation of the christian laws, justly excited the hatred of his subjects; and it is probably owing to the indifference of his character that so little is recorded of the transactions of his short reign \*.

*Æthelbald marries his father's wife.*

*The Danes continue in peace during the reign of Æthelbald.* During the time that Æthelbald sat upon the throne, the Danes appear to have remained in perfect peace. It is probable, that the defeats they had received towards the latter end of the reign of Æthelwulf were so decisive, that they had not as yet recovered strength sufficient to renew the war with the Saxons.

A. D. 860. After a reign of two years Æthelbald died, and his body was buried at Sherborne†. To delineate the character of this prince with any certainty, is impossible. As he was by no means a favourite of the clergy, the monkish writers have suppressed, or hastily passed over his amiable qualities, and drawn only the dark shades of his character‡; yet, whatever were his errors, he wanted not personal valour, of which he gave signal proof, while fighting under his father, at the battle of Ockley, where the Danes received so signal a defeat.

*The wife of Æthelbald returns to France.*

After the death of Æthelbald, his wife Judith was sent back to France; and, as she was returning to her father's court, she was seized upon by Baldwin, a nobleman, in the forest of Arden, and by him detained till she consented to marry him. Some time after, Baldwin, being reconciled to Charles, king of France, his father-in-law, he was by him created earl of Flanders. By this lady Baldwin had issue a son, named Baldwin after his father, who married Ælfreda, the youngest daughter of Ælfred the Great.—Æthelbald left no issue to succeed him in the kingdom.

\* Aferius vit. Ælfredi, &c.

† Chron. Sax. sub an. 860.

‡ Huntington, it is true, makes mention of this prince in a very favourable light;

and Mat. West. declares, that he repented of his incestuous marriage; but Aferius, who lived at that time, makes not the least mention of any such thing.

Æ T H E L

## ÆTHELBRYHT.

*The fourth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

ÆTHELBRYHT, who from the time of his uncle Æthel-A. D. 860. stan's death, had held the viceroyship of Suffex, Kent, and Essex, upon the decease of his brother Æthelbald, succeeded to the throne of Wessex, and his younger brother Æthered was promoted to the viceroyship which he himself before possessed\*.

Soon after the coronation of Æthelbryht, the Danes (who had now recovered their strength by the arrival of fresh parties) made a descent upon the southern parts of Wessex, and proceeded as far as Winchester, which city they destroyed, and pillaged the country round about; but as they were returning to their ships in triumph, loaded with their spoils, they were unexpectedly met by a large army of the Saxons, commanded by Æthelric, earl of Hampton, and Æthelwulf, earl of Berkshire. A bloody engagement ensued, in which the Danes were routed with great slaughter, and the remnant that escaped fled with the utmost precipitation to their ships, leaving all their booty behind them in the possession of the Saxon army†. This signal defeat damped the courage of the Danes, who returned home disheartened, and ceased, for a considerable time, to molest the quiet of the Saxons.

Æthelbryht now ruled over his dominions in profound tranquillity A. D. 865. upwards of four years, at which time the Danes, having strongly reinforced their army, landed in the isle of Thanet, and, in the heat of their revenge, pillaged and destroyed the country wherever they came; but soon after they made a league with the inhabitants of Kent, that, in consideration of a certain sum of money being paid to them, they would cease all hostilities.----But soon after the commencement of the truce, the Danes, contrary to their solemn engagements, left their strong holds by night, and wasted all the eastern parts of Kent; nor did they meet with much resistance, for the miserable inhabitants depending upon the continuation of the peace, were dispersed, each following his separate employment at his own home, unsuspecting of any danger. This breach of the truce being quickly made known throughout

\* Chron. Sax. &amp;c.

† Ibid. &amp;c.

all Kent, the people instantly armed to revenge themselves, and soon forming large parties, they made head against the Danes, whom they routed with great slaughter, and at last drove them entirely out of the country\*.

A. D. 866. Early in the beginning of the following year Æthelbryht died, much lamented by his subjects, whom he had governed upwards of five years in a prudent manner, and by whom he was dearly loved.----So hastily have the ancient historians passed over the life and actions of this prince, that it is impossible to delineate his character with any perfection; yet, from the feeble tracings that are left, we discover the features of a virtuous disposition, and many amiable qualities. His remains were interred, with great solemnity, at Shirborne†.

The supposed  
issue of Æthel-  
bryht.

If he was ever married, the name of his wife is now unknown, and the issue, which are attributed to him, are rather uncertain. They are said to have been two sons, Ethelm and Ethelwald, both mentioned in the will of king Ælfred as his brother's children; the latter of these proved a dangerous enemy to his first cousin Edward the elder, the son of Ælfred the Great.

\* Aferius in vit. Ælfredi, & Chron. Sax. sub an. 865, &c.

† Ibid.

ÆTHERED,

## ÆTHERED, or ÆTHELRED.

*The fifth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

ÆTHERED, the third son of Æthelwulf, succeeded his brother in the government of the Heptarchy. As soon as he ascended the throne of Wessex, he took into his own hands the provinces of Sussex, Kent, and Essex, which had before been held by the next heir to the crown. His younger brother, Ælfred, however, at the coronation of Æthered made a demand of these provinces in the presence of all the nobility then assembled; alledging, at the same time, that he grounded his demand on the promise of Æthered, that he should have them upon his coming to the throne of Wessex, which promise Æthered now refused to perform. The dispute was settled by a new agreement, that Æthered should hold those provinces in his own hand during his life, and that the whole of the kingdom should descend to his brother Ælfred upon his decease; and that, in the mean time, Ælfred should have his share of all the lands which should be conquered by their joint forces; also, that their sons should succeed one another in their order; and, whoever should be the survivor, was to give the other's children all those lands that the father was made heir to by Æthelwulf, as well as all that he should acquire by conquest. This joint agreement was ratified and confirmed in a full council of all the nobility of Wessex held at Swinburne\*.

A. D. 866

Agreement between Æthered and Ælfred.

In the first year of the reign of Æthered, the Danes again returned to England. They came now with a numerous army (under the conduct of two noblemen, who were brothers, named Hingnar and Hubba) in a powerful fleet, and landed on the borders of the province of the East Angles, where they continued during the winter, making a league with the inhabitants, on certain conditions, to forbear all hostilities for a time.

The Danes land in the East Angles.

In the spring of the year following, the Danish host left the province of the East Angles, and passing beyond the Humber, entered

A. D. 867.

The Danes go to Northumbria and.

\* See Carte's General History of England, Vol. I. page 296 &amp; 297.

the kingdom of Northumberland, and proceeded as far as York \*. In their course they met with an army of Northumbers, led by Osbryht, who, with Ælla, another usurping prince, held the government of Northumberland at that time. A sharp engagement ensued between the Danes and the Northumbers, which ended in the favour of the former; for the latter were put to flight with the loss of their king, and the greater part of their army. This unfortunate defeat of the Northumbers opened a free passage to the Danes, who, when they arrived at York, took possession of that city †. While they continued there, Ælla was informed of the overthrow of his co-partner Osbryht, and learning where the Danes resided, he collected all the forces he could, and marched out against them. In the mean time, the Danes continued at York, waiting his arrival. When he approached the city, they came out against him, and, in a pitched battle, the Northumbers were again overthrown with the loss of the greater part of their army, and of Ælla their king, who was slain upon the spot; and from him, the place where the battle was fought, was after called Ælla-croft ‡. These two kings being thus slain, and the chief force of the Northumbers cut to pieces, the whole province was left, as it were, defenceless, and open to the marches of the Danes, who looked upon their footing as so firmly established there, that they set up a king of their own named Guthred, who governed the whole kingdom§.

Reasons for the rapid progress of the Danes in Northumberland.

It is sufficiently evident, that the Northumbers were reduced to this miserable condition by their own neglect; for instead of maintaining unity and order amongst themselves, they were divided into parties, and at continual variance with each other. Even the princes or kings, whom they set up over them, seem to have paid so little regard to justice, that their reigns were disturbed with continual rebellions; nay, it is affirmed by some authors, that the intemperate lust and ignorance of Osbryht excited the resentment of one of his chief nobles, who, in order to revenge himself, fled to the Danes, and persuaded them to undertake the conquest of Northumberland ||. Whilst things were in  
this

\* Some authors have declared, that the Danes first spoiled the island of Lindisfarne before they entered Northumberland, vid. S. Dunelm.

† Asferius in vit. Ælfredi, Chron. Sax. sub an. 867.

‡ Ibid, & Simon Dunelm.

§ Simon Dunelm.

|| Bronipton. S. Dunelm, &c. Simon Dunelm in particular has related the story at large; which is, in brief, as follows. Osbryht, who reigned over one part of Northumberland, ravished a noble lady, the

wife of a chieftain named Bruern Brocard, who was thereby justly incensed against Osbryht. He therefore left Northumberland, and went over into Denmark, and besought Codrinus, who was king there, to revenge his cause; at the same time informing him of the weakness of his country through the divisions and intestine troubles which existed there. The hopes of conquering so large a tract of land soon induced the Danes to lend a favourable ear to the intreaties of Bruern. Therefore, a large army, under the conduct of Hinger and

this dreadful state, the Northumbers were obliged to make peace with the Danes in the best manner they could, and submit quietly to the government of their king; and the conquerors, on these conditions, promised to cease all hostilities\*.

Having thus secured themselves in Northumberland, the Danish army set forward the following summer, and proceeding southward came to Nottingham, where, meeting with no resistance sufficient to dislodge them, they continued during the winter.

The Danes winter at Nottingham.

In the beginning of the following year, Burhred, king of Mercia, by the advice of his council, sent messengers to Æthelred and his brother Ælfred, informing them where the Danes had taken up their residence, and the dangerous tendency of their being permitted to remain there unmolested, and at the same time begging their assistance against them. When Æthelred and his brother received this intelligence, they speedily collected what troops they could, and marched towards Nottingham, being joined on the way by Burhred and the Mercian army. As soon as they reached Nottingham (wherein the Danes had fortified themselves) they laid a close siege thereto, and so harassed the besieged, that they were obliged to conclude a peace with them, and return to the North. They then retired to York, where they remained the winter following†.

The Danes driven back to York.

The succeeding spring the Danes left York, and passing through Lindsey, ranged along the eastern borders of England, till they came to a place called Thetford in the province of the East Angles. This was a bloody and destructive march; for the merciless Danes laid the country waste with fire and sword wherever they came; towns and cities they rased to the ground, and miserably butchered the inhabitants, sparing neither young nor old, who were so unhappy as to fall into their hands. The monasteries of Bradney, Croyland and Peterborough, together with the nuns house, in the isle of Ely, were all totally destroyed‡. Eadmund, who at this time was king of the province of the East Angles, used all his endeavours to stop the course of these invaders, who, like a torrent, overwhelmed his dominions with ruin. Having collected all the forces he was able to muster, he followed them to Thetford; but fortune still favouring their attempts, the army of the East Angles was overthrown, and Eadmund himself

The murder of Eadmund, king of the East Angles.

and Hubba, returned with him to England; and the end of his revenge was the destruction of his country. This, by the same author, is said to have been the first cause of the outrages of the Danes which followed.

\* Chron. Sax. ut sup. &c.

† Chron. Sax. &c.

‡ S. Dunelm, &c.

narrowly escaped their pursuit. At last, however, he reached the castle at Framingham, where he fortified himself in the best manner he could. But he had not long resided there, when the Danes, learning whither he had retired, came and laid siege to the castle, and at last, after an obstinate resistance, the fortress was taken, and he himself made prisoner. No sooner had they got possession of his person, than they began, in the most cruel manner, to inflict severe tortures upon him, beating him with scourges, and lancing his flesh with their daggers----when they were tired of tormenting him, they bound him to a tree, and shot him to death with their arrows.

Reasons for the  
cruelty of the  
Danes.

Various reasons are assigned by the ancient historians for the cruelty with which the Danes treated this prince; some affirming, that it was because he would not renounce the christian faith, and worship the gods of the conquerors\*; and this appears really to have been the truth, especially if we allow the pious character given of this prince by the monkish authors to have been justly drawn. Others, again, relate a story concerning the murder of Lothbrock, a Dane, the father of Hingar and Hubba, with which Eadmund was falsely charged †.

Some account  
of the East An-  
gles.

The history of the East Angles, from the death of Ethelbyrht (at which time this province fell into the hands of Offa, king of Mercia, and afterwards became a part of the West Saxon dominion) is very imperfect. We learn, however, that about the year 854, there reigned a king named Offa in this province, who, at that time undertook a journey to the Holy Land. Passing through Saxony, he adopted Eadmund, son of king Alkmund (a near relation of his) as heir to the crown. Offa dying at Port Saint George, on his return home, sent his ring to Eadmund, thereby constituting him king of the East Angles. When Eadmund heard of the death of Offa, and had received

\* After. ann. W. Malmf. lib. 2. &c.

† Matthew Westminster, & alia. The story mentioned above in brief is thus. Lothbrock, the father of Hingar and Hubba, one day amusing himself with his hawk upon the sea shore, the bird fell into the sea, to recover which, he put from shore in a little boat, when a tempest arising suddenly, he was driven out to sea; and after having narrowly escaped drowning, was driven a shore on the coast of Norfolk, where he was well received by Eadmund, then king of the East Angles; who conceiving a great esteem for him, but especially because of his great skill in managing the hawks and hawking, inasmuch, that Berick, the king's falconer, being greatly envious and jealous of him, slew him privately in a wood, where his

body was discovered by means of his favourite spaniel; and Berick being convicted of the murder, was condemned to be put into the same boat in which Lothbrock came, without rudder, oars, or sail, and so left to the mercy of the waves; but fate conducted him to the very port from whence Lothbrock had first put to sea, where, he being known, was seized by the Danes; but to free himself from punishment, he accused his master, king Eadmund, of being the whole contriver (if not the perpetrator) of this cruel murder; in revenge of which, Hingar and Hubba, the sons of the deceased Lothbrock, brought a great army into England, where, proving victorious over the forces of king Eadmund, himself was taken prisoner, and shot to death with arrows. Mat. West. &c.

the



the ring, he came over into England with a suitable retinue, and being well received by the inhabitants of the East Angles, was crowned king, with great acclamations of joy, by Humberchtus, bishop of the East Angles, in a royal city named Burna, in the year 855; so that he had sat upon the throne fifteen years when he was murdered, as before related. After the Danes had put him to death, his body was taken up, and buried at a town, which, from being the burial place, was ever afterwards called St. Edmond's Bury\*. Upon the death of Eadmund, the Danes took possession of the whole province, and set up a king of their own named Godrun, to govern there†.

The great success which the Danes had hitherto met with encouraged them to make fresh attacks upon the Saxons; therefore, leaving the East Angles under the government of the new king, they marched further into the heart of the kingdom, and came to a town called Readingam‡, on the borders of Wessex, where they halted. Two days after their arrival at this town, a bloody skirmish happened between two of their chief leaders, with their bands who were foraging, and the Saxons under the command of Æthelwulf, earl of Berkshire. The Saxons contrived to intercept the Danes when they were at a considerable distance from their camp. The Danes, perceiving their danger, made a long and vigorous resistance, till at last, after great slaughter on both sides, one of the Danish chiefs named Sidroc, being killed, and his party routed, the rest were obliged to retreat in the best manner they could, and the Saxons obtained a complete victory§.

The Danes go to Reading.

In the mean time, Æthered, king of Wessex, together with his brother Ælfred, who had taken every measure they could to prevent the progress of the Danes, had now collected a powerful army together, and, four days after the victory obtained by Æthelwulf, coming up with the Danes at Reading, he gave them battle. The Danes, being superior in force to the Saxons, obtained the victory, after an obstinate resistance from their opponents, and with so much loss to themselves, that they thought it not prudent, at that time, to hazard another battle. They, therefore, left Reading, and went to Assendune. The Saxons sustained a considerable loss in this battle; and, amongst the rest, the valiant Æthelwulf, earl of Berkshire, lost his life||. Notwithstanding the loss on the side of the Saxons, and the advantage gained by the Danes, Æthered, and his brother Ælfred, resolved, with the forces they had yet left, to follow them to Assendune, which they did, with such expedition, that, in four days, the two ar-

The battle of Reading.

\* Malmsh. &c.

sub an. 871.

† Sim. Dunelm, Mat. West. &c.

§ Ibid.

‡ Reading in Berkshire, See Chron. Sax.

|| Ibid.

mies met again. The Danes had now divided their forces into two bodies, one of which was led by two chiefs, who bore the title of kings, named Hleafeþene and Bachfeg; and the other, by some principal noblemen. When Æthered saw the arrangement of his enemies, he also made two bodies of his own army, one of which he led himself, and the other he committed to the charge of Ælfred his brother.—Ælfred began the battle\*, and being seconded by the king and his party, the Danes were forced from the advantageous ground they had possessed in the beginning of the encounter, and after much slaughter, were put to flight, when the Saxons obtained a complete victory. In this battle the Danes lost Bachfeg the king, who was one of their chief leaders, five earls†, and many thousand of less note. This victory, therefore, was esteemed the greatest that had been till then obtained over the Danes in England.

The battle of Basing.

The Danes, disheartened by the important conquest which the Saxons had gained over them, fled, day and night, till they reached Basing, being still pursued by the king, and his brother Ælfred. Fourteen days after the last action, they again fought the Danes, but were overcome, and obliged to leave the field with great loss. After the Danes had obtained this victory‡, they moved from Basing, and went to Mertune, where they were joined by a considerable reinforcement of their countrymen, who had but lately arrived in England§.

The battle of Mertune.

Æthered and his brother having recruited their army, followed the Danes to Mertune, where another bloody battle was fought. At the beginning of the engagement, the Saxons prevailed against the Danes, but the latter continually receiving reinforcements, the Saxons were, at last, overcome, and obliged to retreat after much slaughter, leaving the field a second time to the Danes. In this battle Eadmund, bishop of Shirborne, was slain, and Æthered himself received his death's wound.----After which he was conveyed from the field of battle to a town called Witingham, where he died the twenty-third day of April, in the year 871, after a troublesome reign of near five years; and his body was solemnly buried at Winburn in Dorsetshire||.

The character of Æthered cannot be drawn.

The whole time this prince sat upon the throne, he was so much employed by the invasions and disturbances occasioned by the Danes, that there is nothing recorded by the ancient historians concerning his political or private character. His personal valour is strongly marked

\* Æthered was, at that time, praying in his tent.--*Aster. in vita Ælfredi.*

† The names of the earls here slain were Sidroc the elder, and Sidroc the younger; Osbeorn, Fræna and Harold. *Aster. vit. Ælfredi & Chron. Sax. &c.*

‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Asterius.*

|| With this epitaph upon his tomb: "*In hoc loco quiescit corpus sancti Ethelredi regis West Saxonum martyris, qui anno domini 871, 23 dies Aprilis, per manus Dacorum Paganorum occubuit.*" This tomb with the inscription was very lately remaining. Vide Speed's Chronicle, fol. 328.

in the various battles he fought against the Danes, and his unwearied assiduity to protect his falling country from ruin.

The wife of Æthered is not mentioned; but his issue, two sons and one daughter. Ælfred, his eldest son, is said to have been grandfather to Æthelwerd, a nobleman, who wrote a concise history of this kingdom, from the birth of Christ, down to his own times. The second son of Æthered was named Oswald; but of him we have not the faintest account left\*. The daughter of this prince was named Thyre, who married, as some have affirmed, Godrun the Danish king of the East Angles†.

\* Both these princes are witnesses to a charter of Æthelwitha's, queen of Mercia, of lands granted to Abbendon abbey, dated 868. See an ancient copy of this charter in the Cotton Library in a MS marked Claudius B 6.

one son named Harold, which Harold married Gonhild, by whom he had Sweyne, king of Denmark; Iringe, king of Northumberland; and Gonhild, queen of Wales. Sweyne, king of Denmark, was the father of Cnut, afterwards king of England.

† Godrun is said to have issue, by this lady,

## Æ L F R E D.

*The sixth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 871.

Ælfred meets  
his brother.

UPON the decease of Æthered, his brother Ælfred succeeded to the crown of Wessex, notwithstanding Æthered left male issue behind him; but this was not only according to the agreement made between Ælfred, and the king his brother (as before mentioned) but also agreeable to the tenor of the last testament of Æthered, who therein declared that he bequeathed the crown to Ælfred; besides the sons of Æthered were not at this time of age sufficient to take upon them the government of the kingdom.

Ælfred joyfully  
received by his  
subjects.

Ælfred was the youngest son of king Æthelwulf, born in Berkshire, at a small village called Wanting, in the year 849, and had just entered into his twenty-second year when he ascended the throne. No prince was ever received with greater joy by his subjects, for the great prudence and valour which he had manifested, in his brother's life time, led them to expect great things from his administration. He was, therefore crowned, with great splendour, at Winchester\*.

The battle of  
Wilton, &c.

About a month after the coronation of Ælfred, he led his army against the Danes, who were then at Wilton in Sussex, and gave them battle. After an obstinate resistance on the part of the Saxons, the Danes proved victorious (though not without considerable loss on their side) and chased their opponents, who fled with great precipitation to the woods, where they made good their retreat. The rumour of this overthrow of the Saxon army caused the people from all quarters to flock to the standard of their king, who finding his army very powerful, set forward again to meet the Danes; but they retreated before him, not thinking themselves in a condition to resist.—Ælfred, with his army, in the mean time, marched on till he came to London, where a strong party of the Danes had taken up their residence; but not daring to enter the field against him, they petitioned for peace upon his own terms, and offered him as many hostages as he should demand. Their petition was granted by Ælfred, and the same day, according to agreement, hostages were delivered up by the Danes, and they imme-

\* Speed Chron. fol. 329.

diately quitted London, riding day and night, till they reached Exeter, which city, contrary to their covenants of peace, they besieged and took, and there continued. Ælfred was no sooner informed of this breach of faith, than he caused the Danish hostages to be put to death, and marched his army towards Exeter. But the Danes, who had no desire to stand the hazard of a battle, left the city before he approached it, and withdrew to Chipenham in Wiltshire, doing much mischief in their march. Ælfred, on his arrival at Exeter, understanding that the Danes were departed, still pursued them, and that with such diligence, that they were obliged to try the fortune of a pitched battle, and so resolutely desperate were they in their attack, that the Saxons were again obliged to retreat, notwithstanding the Danes lost some of their chief leaders in the conflict \*.

After the defeat at Chippinham, Ælfred being joined by considerable reinforcements from Somersetshire, Wilton, and Dorset, held a council of war, in which it was resolved to follow the Danes, who were now at Abbendon. They accordingly set forward, and marching all night, reached Abbendon about nine o'clock the next morning, and suddenly set upon the Danes, who so valiantly defended themselves, that, after a prodigious slaughter on either side, it was impossible to determine which had the victory, or which sustained the greater loss †. These are some of the particulars of the transactions of this troublesome year, being the first of the reign of Ælfred, and in which the Saxons are said to have fought nine pitched battles against the Danes ‡, besides skirmishes and excursions out of number; and though Ælfred and his party were not always successful, yet so much was the Danish power reduced by the end of the year, that they sued for peace with the West Saxons, swearing never more to make war in their territories §.

The battle of Abbendon.

The year following passed without any action between the Saxons A. D. 872. and the Danes. A great party of the latter, who had resided for some time at Reading in Berkshire, came quietly to London, where they made a league with the Mercians, and then returned without attempting any breach of the peace which they had sworn to keep ||.

Peace made between the Danes and Mercians.

The next year the Danes, leaving Reading, went with their army to A. D. 873. Lindsey, and at a place called Torksey, in the county of Northum-

Peace again confirmed.

\* Bromton, from whom the above particulars are collected, declares, that, in this battle, the Danes lost Hubba the brother of Hingar, and Bruern Bocard, who first brought the Danes into Northumberland, according to the account given by Simon Dunelm. Bromton adds, that the Danes entered the body of Hubba with

loud cries, raising a tumulus over it, which was after called Hubbastow.

† Bromton.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub an. 871. Afferius says only eight pitched battles.

§ Ibid. &c.

|| Chron. Sax. Affer. &c.

berland, remained quiet all the winter; during which time they renewed and confirmed, by fresh oaths, the peace made with the Mercians. In the mean time Ælfred was not idle, but constantly employed in the discipline of his troops, and the putting his territories in the best posture of defence he was able; for the event fully proved, that, though the Danes at present kept up carefully the appearance of perfect peace and harmony, it was but affected for a time, since they were privately preparing for future hostilities, and their army was strengthened by the arrival of a numerous party of their countrymen, under the conduct of two chiefs, who bore the title of kings, named Osçytel and Anwynd. These, together with Godrun, and the Danes, who were in the province of the East Angles, joined the main army \*.

A. D. 874. These powerful reinforcements rendered the army of the Danes so strong, that without the least regard to the peace which they had sworn to keep with the Mercians in the two former years, they now resolved to commence hostilities, and accordingly entered Mercia with fire and sword, and proceeded as far as Ripendune, where they overcame the Mercian forces, and constrained Burhred their king to fly from his dominions. After they had conquered Mercia, they returned to Ripendune, where they wintered, and set up a king of their own over the people of that province. This prince, whose name was Coelwulph †, had the regal dignity conferred upon him, on condition that he should resign his authority whenever they should demand it of him ‡.

Death, &c. of  
Burhred.

Burhred, whom the Danes had compelled to leave his kingdom, was a man of great valour, and had been put in possession of the Mercian crown by Æthelwulf, A. D. 851, and as a reward for his valiant conduct against the Britons, two years afterward, Æthelwulf gave him his daughter Æthelswitha in marriage. He also used his utmost endeavours on the present occasion against the Danes, until harrassed out by their continual attacks, his army was so diminished, that at last he was no longer in a condition to resist them. He therefore left Mercia with Æthelswitha his wife, and went to Rome, where he died the same year, and was buried there in a chapel of our Lady belonging to the English college. His queen survived him fifteen years, and died at Padua in the year 889, where she was honourably buried §.

A. D. 875. The following year, the Danes, encouraged by their success, and strengthened with fresh reinforcements, divided their army into two bodies, one of which, under the conduct of Hleasdene, marched into the conquered province of Northumberland, and spent the winter upon

The Danes divide their army.

\* Ibid.  
† Ibid.

‡ J. Bromton.  
§ W. Malmsh. lib. 1. cap. 4.

the borders of the river Tine.---The second party, headed by Godrun, Ocytel and Anwynd, went back to Grant Bridge \* in the kingdom of the East Angles, where they also spent the summer. Whilst these motions were making by the Danish army upon land during the summer, Ælfred, who was cruising upon the seas, fought seven of their ships, one of which he took, and put the rest to flight.

Early in the beginning of the ensuing year, the Danes left Grant Bridge A. D. 876. by night, and proceeded as far as the castle at Warham, where they were met by the Saxon army, under the conduct of Ælfred their king, who advanced thus far in order to oppose them; and at this place, either by power or policy, he obtained of them a solemn confirmation of peace †; for the Danes not only gave hostages on their part, but swore to him on their own holy bracelet, which was kept upon the altars of their gods, that they would by no means infringe their covenant ‡.---This oath, the most solemn they could take, was such as they had never sworn before to any king or nation whatever; yet, the very night after they had thus solemnly bound themselves to peace, they stole silently out of the castle of Warham, and rode on to Exeter, which city they entered, committing many open hostilities. Ælfred finding that they had departed from Warham, and already broken their oath, pursued them with all possible speed to Exeter, at which city they had stopped §.

Whilst these affairs were transacting, the Danish fleet, which was sailing round from the coast of the East Angles in order to reach Exeter, and join the army assembled there, was nearly destroyed by a terrible tempest, in which they lost one hundred and twenty of their best ships. This dreadful accident happened to them near a place called Swanawic ||. The Danes, who were lodged at Exeter in expectation of their supplies, were so much alarmed at the news of this misfortune, that they dared not to engage the Saxons who were now arrived, and lay before the town. They, therefore, sued for peace, and gave as many hostages as Ælfred chose to demand; after which they departed quietly into Mercia, where they abode for a time ¶.

The year following, having strengthened and refreshed their army, the Danes invaded the territories of the West Saxons, and proceeded as far as Chipenham, wasting and destroying the country wherever they

Peace concluded.

The Danish fleet destroyed by a tempest.

The Danes invade West-sax.

\* Now Cambridge.

† Æthelwerd declares he obtained this peace for money: "Quin etiam rex pacem cum eis pacis confirmat simulque pecuniam dando." Æthelwerdi Hist. sub anno 876.

‡ Ibid. Affr. & Chron. Sax.

§ Ibid.

|| Thought to be Sandwich.

¶ Chron. Sax. &c.

came,

came, infomuch that many of the inhabitants left their estates, and fled to foreign parts. Neither was Ælfred able to prevent their destructive ravages; for he, himself, with some few of his fast friends, were obliged to keep themselves secretly in the woods, marshes, and inaccessible places, where they supported themselves, as they could, by hunting, hawking, or fishing. Nor was their retreat known to the English themselves, who generally believed that their king was dead. It is indeed reported, that he was reduced to so miserable a condition as to be forced, in disguise, to seek protection in the house of a cottager in Somersetshire, named Dunwulf, where he remained for some time dependant upon him for his food, and subject to the various impertinencies of the peasant's wife. However, he bore his misfortunes with the greatest patience, and, instead of sinking under them, was ever thinking of the best methods of extricating himself from them, and of restoring tranquillity to his people\*.

The Danes overthrown in Dorsetshire.

In the mean time, a large party of the Danes, under the conduct of Hlafdene, and a brother of Hingar, left Mercia, and with twenty-three ships, infested the sea coasts of Wessex, and at last landed in Dorsetshire, where they took great spoils, and proceeded with great security until they reached a strong castle called Kenwith, from whence the garrison issued out unexpectedly, and made a desperate attack upon the Danes, who, after an obstinate resistance, were put to flight, with the loss of their spoils, and twelve hundred men, who were left dead on the field †. Some authors affirm, that it was in this battle that Hubba fell, who was the brother of Hingar, both of them the sons of Lothbroc; and that amongst the spoils taken by the Saxons was the Danish standard, called Reafen, from the figure of a raven which was embroidered upon it, and said to be the performance of the three daughters of Lothbroc ‡.

Ælfred quits his confinement.

As this defeat damped the courage of the Danes, so it revived the hopes of liberty in the breasts of the Saxons; and Ælfred their king, joined by some few warriors who had discovered his retreat, built a small fortress in the isle of Etheling in Somersetshire, where they defended themselves, and frequently sallied out on the enemy. The people of Somersetshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire, now receiving information that their king was living, gathered themselves together, and being joined by a great number of those who had fled, in the beginning of the year, into foreign parts, and now were returned, they proceeded to Selwood, and at a place called Egbryhtstone, were met by their king, whom they received with the greatest demonstrations of joy, and as one risen from the dead §.

\* *Affer. &c. ut sup.*

† *Ibid. &c.*

‡ *Alured Rivalen, &c.*

§ *Affer. Chron. Sax. &c.*



Ælfred, placing himself at the head of this army, marched to Ethen-  
dune, where he met with the Danes, and gave them battle; and, after  
a very bloody encounter, obtained a complete victory. The remnant  
of the Danes that escaped the pursuit of Ælfred, fled to a castle which  
they had built not far from the place where the battle was fought, and  
fortified themselves there; but Ælfred soon reached the castle, and laid  
close siege thereto; so that after fourteen days had elapsed, despairing  
of any assistance, and distressed for the want of provisions, they sued  
for peace in a most humble manner, offering pledges, which were ac-  
cepted by Ælfred, and they again took oath to molest the English no  
more\*.

The Danes  
overcome at  
Ethen-dune.

At the same time Godrun, the Danish king of the East Angles, for-  
sook his idolatrous worship, and, of his own accord, embraced the  
Christian religion, being baptized by the name of Æthelstane, at a place  
called Alre, not far from Ethelingsey in Somersetshire. King Ælfred,  
who was present at the ceremony, became sponsor for him, and there  
confirmed, by free gift, his title to the crown of the East Angles †; .  
also thirty of the chief Danish nobility received baptism at the same  
time with Godrun, and were honoured with peculiar marks of esteem  
by Ælfred and his followers.

Godrun be-  
comes a Chris-  
tian.

After the conclusion of the above peace, the Danes left Chipenham, A. D. 879.  
retired peaceably to Cyrencester ‡, and remained one year without  
making the least infringement on their covenant. The same year an-  
other large party of the Danes landed in England, and passing through  
the kingdom of the East Angles, came quietly to Fullenham §, upon  
the borders of the Thames, where they passed the winter peaceably ||.

The Danes re-  
tire, and keep  
peaceable.

This year the Danes, who wintered at Cyrencester, left that city, A. D. 880.  
and returned into the province of the East Angles, which had been al-  
lotted to them. Upon their return they took possession of all the  
lands, which they portioned out among themselves, and there esta-  
blished their residence. In the mean time, those Danes who arrived  
the year before, and had wintered at Fullenham, seeing, perhaps, that  
from the present posture of affairs, there remained little hopes of their

The Danes set-  
tle in the pro-  
vince of the  
East Angles.

\* Ibid. & Sim. Dunelm.

† The bounds of Godrun's dominions, according to this gift, are to be seen at the end of the laws of Ælfred, where the covenant between those two princes is still preserved as follows :

“ Æþeƿt ymb une landgemena  
“ up on Temere, ⁊ þonne up  
“ on Ligan, ⁊ and lang ligan  
“ oð hipe æþylm þonne on ge-  
“ þuhte to Bedanƿerða ðonne

“ upon Ugan cð Wærlinga-  
“ ƿreæt:”

Let the bounds of our dominion stretch from the river Thames, and from thence to the water-Lea, even to the head thereof, and so forth straight to Bedford, from thence along the river Ouse, and let them end at Watling-street. *Fœdus Aluredi*, cap. 1.

‡ Chichester.

§ Fulham.

|| Chron. Sax. Affr. &c.

obtaining

obtaining any considerable plunder by their stay, left the kingdom, and went into France\*. Whilst these motions were making by the Danes, Ælfred employed this interval of peace in restoring good discipline among his troops, and in re-building or repairing such places of strength as had been destroyed during the late war, and which were necessary for the defence of his territories.

A. D. 882. The two following years, among other useful regulations made by Ælfred, one of the most important was, that of increasing his naval force, which he employed in guarding his coasts. The prudence of this step was soon evinced by the success which attended its execution; for in the year 882, as he was cruising from place to place, he met with four Danish ships making towards the land, and coming up with them, engaged them, when, after a stout resistance, he took two of their ships, the crews of which he put to death by the sword, or threw into the sea. He then pursued the other two, which were using their utmost endeavours to escape; but they were so closely followed by Ælfred's fleet, that they were also taken, and on board of them, amongst other noblemen, were two Danish princes†; whether those taken in the two last ships were put to death like those in the former, does not appear; however, it is likely that they were not, and, perhaps, the reason why those first taken were treated so severely, might be because they would have impeded the pursuit of the other two.

A. D. 885. During two years after this engagement, the Saxons enjoyed a profound peace, suffering no inconvenience whatever from the Danes who were settled within the kingdom, nor from those who were so frequently making excursions from their own country, and infesting the British seas. The Saxon fleet was stationed the first year near the river Scald, and the second, they were removed to Sunnan; but the summer following, the year 885, a large fleet of Danish ships, which were now returning from the coasts of France, entered the Thames mouth, and sailed up the river Medway to Rochester, which city they closely besieged; but the citizens made a noble resistance. At the same time king Ælfred hearing of their danger, hastened to their assistance with a powerful army, and, coming suddenly upon the Danes, he put them to flight with great slaughter; so precipitate was their retreat to their ships, that they left behind them, in their entrenchments, all their horses, as well as many captives, and much spoil, which they had taken upon the coasts of France, and brought thither with them. As soon as they had gained their ships, they crowded all the sail they could, and returned with heavy hearts to France‡.

The same year Ælfred sent a fleet of ships to scour the sea coast towards the borders of the East Angles, and, at the mouth of the Stour,

\* Ibid, &c.

† Chron. Sax. After. &c.

‡ Ibid, ibid. &c.

they

Four Danish  
ships taken.

The Danes beaten at Rochester.

Two sea fights.

they met with sixteen Danish ships, which they attacked, and after a smart engagement, took the whole fleet, and put the crews to death. As they were returning home triumphant, they met with another part of the Danish fleet, whom they also attacked; but, after a bloody battle, the Danes obtained the conquest, and the English ships were put to flight with considerable loss.—Towards the end of this year, the Danes who inhabited the province of the East Angles, and who had hitherto continued quiet, began to make some disturbance, and violate the peace they had sworn to; but, by some means or other, they seem to have been pacified, for it does not appear that hostilities were long continued, or even carried to any great length\*.

The year following Ælfred marched his army to London, which had been greatly damaged in the late wars by the Danes, and who, upon his arrival there, retired; and the Londoners, at least as many as had escaped, and who had been driven from their houses, returned joyfully back. Ælfred, having repaired and fortified their city, appointed Æthered, earl of Mercia, to be their governor †.

Seven years interval of peace which followed, gave Ælfred a good opportunity of putting his dominions in a better posture of defence than they had been heretofore, and this opportunity he carefully improved to his advantage. During the course of this time, no very material accident seems to have happened, except the death of Godrun, or rather Æthelstan, king of the East Angles, who died in the year 890, and was buried at the town of Headley in Suffolk, which was a royal town within his own dominions ‡.

The death of Godrun seems to have been a matter of consequence to the Saxons, for he appears to have performed the conditions agreed upon between him and Ælfred as faithfully as the turbulent disposition of his subjects would permit; but, at his decease, he was succeeded by a Danish nobleman named Eohric §, who, perhaps, not thinking himself bound by the same obligations as his predecessor, nor his subjects under the same restrictions, they were always ready to oppress the Saxons, which they did by frequent violations of the peace, and by lending assistance and protection to many of their countrymen, who afterwards infested the land.

In the year 893, another large fleet of Danish ships, amounting to 250 sail, came from the eastern parts of France, and arrived in Kent at a river called Lemen, near the great wood of Andred, where they landed, and drew their ships four miles from the river's mouth up into the wood, having erected a fortress at a place called Apuldor. Scarcely had they settled themselves in Kent before another fleet of eighty

The city of London repaired.

The death of Godrun.

Fresh parties of the Danes land in Kent.

\* Chron. Sax. &c.

† Ibid.

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‡ Stow Chron.

§ Malmsh. lib. 1. cap. 5.

Danish ships came also into the same province, under the conduct of a great chieftain named Hæsten. They entered the mouth of the Thames, and proceeded as far as Middleton, where they also built a fortress, and continued during the winter\*.

A. D. 894. *Ælfred marches against the Danes.* Ælfred, as soon as he was informed of the proceedings of the Danes in Kent, prepared his army to march against them; but first exacted a fresh oath of fidelity from those Danes who dwelt in Northumberland and the East Angles, by which they were bound not to assist their new-come countrymen, nor to protect them from the assaults of the Saxons. Matters being thus prepared, and fresh hostages taken in the East Angles, Ælfred marched with his army into Kent, and encamped in such a convenient situation between the two armies of the Danes, as to be ready to prevent the progress of either, if they should have been inclined to move from their fortresses, as well as to save the country from being spoiled by detachments from either side. He sent out parties of horse, supported by as many as could be spared from the castles and places of defence, and these were always ready to encounter whatever parties of the Danes they might find detached in foraging parties. At other times, Ælfred divided his whole army into two bodies, and marched out one, leaving the other behind in the entrenchment; by this means he checked the progress of the Danes, and, in a great measure, protected the country from their insults.

*Battle of Aylesford in Kent.* Some time having elapsed in these excursions, Ælfred met with the Danish army at Fernham near Aylesford in Kent, when a sharp engagement ensued, in which the Saxons were victorious. The Danes fled precipitately towards the river Thames, which they passed over, and entered into Essex, making their abode in an island called Breckesey upon the banks of the river Colne, whither they were pursued by Ælfred and his army. In the mean time, a strong party of the Danes who escaped the slaughter of the last engagement, retreated to their fortress, carrying with them their king, who was wounded in the battle.—When Ælfred came up with the Danes, who had fled to Essex, he besieged them in their entrenchments, but after continuing there some time, he was obliged to retreat, being in want of provision †.

*The Danes in Northumberland break the peace.* Whilst Ælfred and his army were thus employed, the Danes, who were settled in Northumberland, contrary to their oath of fidelity made to Ælfred, came, with an hundred ships, coasting round the land by the East Angles, and then proceeded southward as far as Devonshire, where coming to Exeter, they laid siege to that city. Ælfred, when he received this news, had but just recruited his army, and furnished them with sufficiency of provision, intending to recommence the siege of the Danish entrenchments in Essex; but he now changed his former

\* Chron. Sax. Asser. &c.

† Chron. Sax. &c.

resolution,

resolution, and marched with his army directly towards Exeter, leaving behind him a squadron of the Welsh, who went to London\*.

Hæsten, in the mean time, joined the Danes, who were in Essex, and built a strong castle at South Beamflet in that province, where he left a garrison, and proceeded further up into the heart of the country in search of spoils. The squadron of the Welsh, who had been left behind by Ælfred, joined by the Londoners, took this opportunity of marching to Beamflet, where they besieged the castle built by Hæsten, and took it. Here they met with a rich booty which well rewarded them for their trouble, and, amongst the captives which they took, were the wife and two sons of Hæsten. After the victors had demolished the castle, they burnt all the shipping which they found upon the coast, and returned to London, well contented with the success of their expedition †.

The wife and sons of Hæsten, who had been made prisoners by the Londoners, were sent to Ælfred, who commanded them to be set at liberty, and conveyed safely again to the Danish camp. Hæsten, struck with the generous behaviour of Ælfred, took an oath of friendship, and, at the same time, sent hostages to him; and Ælfred, in return, either by free gift, or by agreement, paid him a large sum of money ‡.

Hæsten, however, soon proved the faithfulness of his disposition; for while the Saxon army was still busied at Exeter, he associated himself with those who inhabited the East Angles, and strong parties from Northumberland, he returned to Beamflet, and repaired the castle which had been destroyed by the Londoners. From thence, proceeding to Schoberie, he also built a castle there, placing strong garrisons within both, and pillaging the country around. From thence he proceeded with his army westward, spoiling and robbing the country wherever he came §.

To stop this torrent (in the absence of Ælfred) three of his captains named Æthered, earl of Mercia, Æthelm and Æthelnoth, aided by some of the chief ministers of the king's household, with such forces as they could collect together, came to Bultingaturne upon the banks of the Severn, where the Danes lay entrenched, and blocked up their camp so closely that they cut off all communication between it and the country. The Danes held out the siege for several weeks, but in the end were driven to the greatest distress for the want of provisions, and had eaten part of their horses. Seeing there was no hope of any succour, and inevitable death waiting them for want of food if they continued any longer in their entrenchments, they formed the desperate resolution of cutting their way through the Saxon camp with their swords, or pe-

\* Ibid.

† Chron. Sax.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

ishing in the attempt, rather than submit themselves to the besiegers, or await the approaches of a lingering death. They besides knew, that if they could but once force their way through the entrenchments of their enemies, they might be able to join another party of their own countrymen who lay encamped upon the eastern banks of the river. The event was hazardous; but certain destruction, which seemed to wait them in their present situation, overbalanced the danger; and they put their desperate scheme in execution with all the vigour that despair could enforce. A desperate engagement ensued, in which the Danes sustained great slaughter. However, they obtained their end, though they left the Saxons masters of the field. Those who escaped from the battle made a precipitate retreat, and being joined by those in the other camp, fled into Essex; but this victory was not gained by the Saxons without great loss of blood on their own side, for Ordhelm, one of the king's Thaynes, with a great number of his ministers, and sum friends, fell in the engagement\*.

The Danes raise  
another army.

Laaf, one of the leaders of those Danes who had been defeated upon the banks of the Severn, with great assiduity assembled together, before the winter, a large army of his countrymen from the East Angles and from Northumberland, and came into Essex to join his confederates. Before they proceeded upon their expedition, they sent their wives, their children, and their wealth, into the province of the East Angles, which they esteemed a place of safety for them. When they had taken this step, they marched day and night towards the west, and came to Chester, which city they took before the forces of the Saxons could come up with them. After the Saxons had besieged them two days, they gave over their attempts, and wasted the country round about, driving away all the cattle, leaving them no means of support †.

A. D. 895. The year following the Danes, being no longer able to keep their station for want of provisions, left the city, and invaded North Wales, where they took great spoils, with which they returned, some into Northumberland, and some to the kingdom of the East Angles, as well as into Essex, where they seized upon a small island called Merefig, and continued there some time. The other party of the Danes, in the mean time, having raised the siege of Exeter in their return to the East Angles by sea, landed upon the coasts of Suffex, and began to lay the country waste round about the city of Cisseceaster, when the inhabitants set upon them unexpectedly, and put them to flight. Several hundred of the Danes fell in the encounter, and some of their ships also fell into the hands of the Saxons.—The same year those Danes who had seized upon Merefig island, resolving to winter in Essex, drew up their ships,

The Danes a-  
bandon Chester.

\* Chron. Sax. &c.

† Chron. Sax. some

some into the river Thames, and others into the river Lea, upon the banks of which last they built a strong castle about twenty miles from London, with a view from thence to assault the Londoners, and pillage the country\*.

The summer following the Londoners, assisted by other forces, assaulted the castle of the Danes which they had erected upon the banks of the river Lea; but their enemies being aware of their approach, had prepared for their defence, and the Saxons met with such a sharp reception as obliged them to retreat with the loss of four of their king's captains†. The Danes leave Essex. Ælfred, hearing of this misfortune which the Londoners had sustained, hastened to their relief with his army, and encamped near to the city, to prevent the Danes from molesting the people round about during the time of harvest. At the same time, observing the situation of the Danish fleet, which they had drawn up into the river Lea, he turned the water of that river into other channels, and, by that means, the old bed was left dry, and the ships without any water to float them. When the Danes saw the alarming effects of Ælfred's policy, they were fearful of continuing any longer in their present situation, and marched overland to Quatbridge near the Severn, where they built another castle, and there spent the winter. Mean while their ships, which they left behind them in the river Lea, were demolished, and brought away by the Londoners; but their wives and families were yet in safety in the province of the East Angles, where they had left them two years before‡.

This year the Danes left Quatbridge, where they had wintered; and some of them went into Northumberland, others into the province of the East Angles; the rest having procured ships, sailed into France A pestilence in England. hopes of meeting with greater booties.—The same year a heavy pestilence afflicted the land, of which died not only a prodigious number of the common people, but many noblemen and persons of the highest rank, amongst whom were Coelmund, earl of Kent, Beorhtulf, earl of Essex, and Wulfred, earl of Hampshire.

At the same time the Danes who inhabited the provinces of Northumberland, and the East Angles, were continually harassing the Saxons; but they were more particularly troublesome by the frequent robberies they committed in long swift sailing galleys, with which they infested the southern sea shore. Their galleys were both longer and lighter than any of the Saxon vessels, so that, when they were pursued, they could easily escape. To remedy this inconvenience, Ælfred caused his shipwrights to build him galleys, of his own invention, upon a con-

\* Ibid.

† Henry Huntington reverses this account, and gives the victory to the Saxons,

declaring it was four Danish chiefs who were slain.

‡ Chron. Sax.

struction different from any that had been made before. They were twice as long as the common ones, and some of them carried sixty oars, and some more. Their great advantage was, that they were swifter and steadier than those used either by the Danes or Frisones who infested the seas \*. Nine of these new-constructed galleys he sent against six Danish pirates who were lurking about the isle of Wight, and plundering the towns on the coast.—The Saxon galleys found their enemies lying near the shore upon the coasts of Devon. The Danes, as soon as they saw the approach of the Saxons, put off three of their vessels to meet them. The other three, being aground, were obliged to keep their station. Six, therefore, of the Saxon galleys went against those three of the Danes that were approaching, and the other three proceeded towards the shore to attack those which lay there immovable. A sharp and bloody engagement ensued between the three Danish vessels which were out at sea, and the six galleys of the Saxons; but in the end, after great carnage on both sides, the Danes were overcome, and two of their vessels were taken; the third, indeed, made its escape with only five men on board, all the rest being killed, and returned to the province of the East Angles. Whilst this was performing at sea, the three Saxon galleys that went against those of the Danes which lay upon the shore, being too venturesome, ran so far aground that it was impossible for them to get off again to rejoin their companions. When the Danish soldiers saw this accident, they left their ships, and wading through the water, attacked the Saxon galleys with the utmost fury; nor could the other six galleys of the Saxons give any assistance to their fellows. From the nature of their situation they were, therefore, obliged to defend themselves with all their power. After a bloody and doubtful conflict, in which the Danes lost one hundred and twenty men, and the English forty-two, amongst whom were some of the chief officers, the tide flowed high enough to set the galleys afloat. The Danes quickly retired to their vessels, and put them off to sea, in order, if possible, to escape; but the wind being against them, and the Saxon galleys very swift, they were soon overtaken. The engagement was now so very unequal (for all the Saxon galleys were at liberty, and surrounded the Danes) that conquest soon declared for the Saxons, who took the Danish vessels, and made prisoners of all who remained alive after the battle. The prisoners were sent to Winchester, where Ælfred then resided, who commanded them all to be put to death immediately †.

A. D. 900. After these long successions of troubles, Ælfred had so well secured his dominions that his enemies returned no more to molest him during his reign. All the interval, until his death, he employed for the welfare of his subjects, and their improvement: he regulated the laws, and paid the strictest regard to the administration of justice: he ar-

Ælfred's death.

\* Chron. Sax.

† Chron. Sax. John Bromton, &c.  
duously



duously fought the advancement of learning in his dominions, and was a great encourager of religion and piety. He died justly lamented by all his subjects the twenty-eighth day of February, in the year nine hundred, after a reign of twenty-nine years and six months, and in the fifty-first year of his age. His body was first buried in the cathedral church of St. Peter's in a beautiful monument of porphyry \*; from whence it was afterwards removed, by his son Edward, into the church of the new monastery †.

Ælfred was tall and handsome, of a graceful and pleasing carriage, and courteous in his speech; his person and accomplishments were such as made the most favourable impression upon the minds of his beholders; his memory was very tenacious; and his discourses were mixed with lively and agreeable expressions; his valour and his policy are plainly evinced from his public actions; the first by the battles he fought against the Danes, and the last by the prudent measures he adopted to prevent their excursions. He was also, in his youth, very expert in the polite amusements of hunting and hawking, which at that time were considered as the great requisites in the education of a young nobleman. When he ascended the throne, that no duties belonging to his high office might be neglected, he divided each day into three parts, in which he regularly went through all business whether public or private. His great love for learning led him to dedicate as much of his time to study as the avocations of government would permit; yet even this, in which he took so much delight, he turned to the advantage of his subjects, which seems to have been the grand object of all his actions; for in him the nobles found a prudent governor, the soldiers a valiant general, the religious a defender, and the poor and oppressed one who was always ready to relieve and protect them—He was neither dejected in adversity, nor elated in prosperity; he was liberal and temperate, and though frequently oppressed with a bodily disease, he bore his afflictions with all the patience and resignation of a pious christian.

The wife of Ælfred was Ælfwitha the daughter of Æthelred (first named Mucill ‡) earl of the Mercians, who lived near Gainsborough in Lincolnshire §; her mother was named Eadburg, a lady born of the noble blood of Mercia. She was married in the year 868, and survived her husband four years, dying in the year 904: she was buried in the monastery of nuns which she had founded at Winchester ¶. By this lady Ælfred had six children, two sons and four daughters ¶.

\* After. in vit. Ælfredi.

† Malmfb. lib. 2. c. 4.

‡ That is *great*, thus explained in the margin to Asterius in vit. Ælfredi "Mucill eo quod erat corpore magnus."

§ Gainorum comitis, After. in vit. Ælfredi.

¶ S. Dunelm.

¶ J. Redbourne.

Edward,

Edward, his eldest son, was born in the year 871, and, upon his father's decease, succeeded him in the royal dignity.

Ethelwerd, his second son, was born in the year 880, and was, by his father's appointment, educated at the university of Oxford, as well for his own improvement, as for an example for the nobility to follow, in bringing up their children to learning and a knowledge of the polite arts.—The education which was bestowed upon Ethelwerd was not lost, for he became a man of erudition, and a great philosopher. His father, by his last will, bequeathed to him the counties of Devon, Somerset, and Southampton, which he governed with great justice and wisdom. He died the 16th of October, in the year 922, aged forty-two, and was buried at Winchester.

Ælfleda, his eldest daughter, was married to Æthered, earl of Mercia, to whom, in consideration of that marriage, the government of Mercia was committed.

Æthelfwitha, his second daughter, was married to Baldwin the second, surnamed the Bald, Earl of Flanders.

Eftedam and Elfgivam, the two youngest daughters, were never married, but passed their days in the cloysters. The latter of these was, by her father's appointment, placed in the monastery of Shaftsbury in the county of Dorset, founded by him, where she became the abbess, and there died, and was buried.

**EDWARD**

EDWARD, *surnamed The Elder.**The Seventh Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

ON the decease of Ælfred, his eldest son, Edward, was chosen by A. D. 900. the West Saxons to succeed him in the throne, to which he was advanced the same year, and crowned, with great pomp, at Kingston upon Thames. Edward succeeds his father

Soon after the coronation of Edward, Æthelwald, an ambitious young nobleman, laid a claim to the crown of Wessex, and, being assisted by a strong party of discontents, broke out into open rebellion, and seized upon the town of Winbourne, near Bath, which he made his place of residence.—This young man, it seems, was son to Æthelbryht, the second son of Æthelwulf, and brother to Ælfred; so that king Edward was his first cousin. He was too young, upon the decease of his father, to take the charge of the government, and was afterwards withheld by his uncles\*; however, by asserting his claim at this time, he proved a dangerous enemy to his cousin Edward. Being lodged with his party at Winbourne, he declared to them, that he was resolved to defend himself there against the assaults of Edward, or die in the attempt.—Edward, in the mean time, hearing of this rebellion, marched with his army towards Winbourne, and arriving at Banbury, in the neighbourhood of Winbourne, he encamped before the city. A. D. 901. The rebellion of Æthelwald.

Æthelwald, fearful of the event, notwithstanding his former boasts, stole out privately by night, and fled into Northumberland, where he joined the Danish army, which lay encamped on that side of the Humber. After the departure of Æthelwald, the city of Winbourne was surrendered up to Edward, who entering in amongst other persons, found the wife of Æthelwald, a woman whom he had forced from a convent (where she had taken the veil) and married, contrary to the strict commands of the church; but she was restored to her former situation, by the command of Edward. As soon as the flight of Æthelwald leaves his army

\* This is the most general and most probable account of Æthelwald; some authors indeed have affirmed that he was cousin german, and others that he was brother to Edward. The latter of these is by no means likely.

Æthelwald was made known to the king, he sent out a party of his troops in pursuit of him, but all their endeavours to take him proved unsuccessful.\*

A. D. 905. Æthelwald, after he had joined the Danish army, made known to them the occasion of his flight from England, and the claim which he had to the crown of Wessex. They received him with great demonstrations of friendship, and promised him to espouse his cause, no doubt being glad of such a plausible pretext for the violation of the peace which yet existed between them and the Saxons; moreover, they might expect that, whilst the claim of Æthelwald was supported, a division might thereby be made in the Saxon state in favour of him, which could not fail of terminating to their advantage†.—Three years after they went, under his conduct, into the East Angles, where they were joined by the Danes who inhabited that kingdom; and the year following (905) they broke the league of peace, and entered Mercia with their army, pillaging and destroying the country as far as Creckland, where they passed the Thames, and entering Wiltshire, proceeded to Basingstoke; after which they returned back into the kingdom of the East Angles, laden with spoils.—Edward, hearing of these dangerous proceedings, marched with his army after them, and entering the kingdom of the East Angles, laid the country waste between the Dyke and the Ouse, and northward as far as the Fens; when, being desirous of returning, he began his march, first strictly ordering that his whole army should follow closely after him: but the Kentish-men, who formed a considerable body, for some cause or other disobeyed his orders, and staid behind, notwithstanding seven messengers were dispatched to them, from the king, to desire them to follow immediately.—In the mean time, the Danes, who had watched their opportunity, finding that the king was departed with the greater part of his army, fell upon those who staid behind, and a bloody battle ensued. The Kentish-men made a valiant resistance; and though, after great carnage on both sides, they were obliged to quit the field, yet it was not before they had so far reduced the power of the Danes, that they had but little cause to boast of the victory. Besides the great number of common men the Saxons lost in this battle, the two earls Sigewulf and Sigelm, Eadwold, one of the king's ministers, Cenwulf an abbot, and many other persons of distinction, were found among the slain.—On the side of the Danes, were killed Eohric, king of the East Angles, who had succeeded Godrun in the

\* Bromton, &c.

† Some authors have affirmed that the Danes, to give the greater consequence to

Æthelwald, invested him with the title and authority of a king. Chron. Urivalensis Monast.

year 890, and Æthelwald, the seditious author of the war, as also several noble men, and a prodigious number of private foldiers.\*

What steps were taken immediately after this important battle, A. D. 907, either by Edward or the Danes, do not appear; the latter, however, seem to have suffered so severely by this dear-bought victory, that they were not desirous of renewing the war; and the Saxons, on the other hand, were no less inclined to peace. Accordingly, two years after, a peace was concluded between the Danes, as well in Northumberland as in the kingdom of the East Angles, and the Saxons, which was ratified by king Edward and his nobles.†

This truce continued three years unviolated, at which period the war was again renewed; but what provocation was given, or to which party the infringement of the treaty was owing, is not recorded. However, at this time king Edward caused a powerful army to be raised in Wessex and Mercia, which he sent beyond the Humber, against the Danes who resided in Northumberland. The Saxon forces entered Northumberland with fire and sword, and after staying there five weeks, during which time they made prodigious slaughter amongst the Danes, they returned home, laden with the spoils of their enemies.‡

The following year, the Danes, rejecting all offers of peace, entered Mercia, and retaliated the injuries which they had received; but being met by a strong party of the Saxons, at Tetnal in Staffordshire §, they were overthrown in a set battle. In the mean time king Edward was in Kent, and had collected about an hundred sail of ships, and was met by others which had been cruising upon the southern coasts. The Danes (hearing how Edward was employed, and imagining the greatest part of his army was sent on board the vessels) collected all the forces they could, and advancing beyond the Severn into Wessex, plundered every part of the country they passed through. The king, hearing of their proceedings, marched against them with all expedition, and came up with them, unexpectedly, at a place called Wodensfield, in Staffordshire ||, as they were returning home: a bloody battle ensued, in which the Danes, after a desperate resistance, were totally overcome, with the loss of some thousands of their army,

\* Chron. Sax. &c.

§ Forest. Bromton, &c.

† S. Dunelm says, "Rex Edwardus, necessitate compulsus, pacem firmavit cum Orientalibus Anglis & Northanhymborum," &c.

‡ Chron. Sax.

|| Others say this action happened at Cantbrig, in Gloucestershire; vid. Milton's Hist. of Eng. fol. 253.—"Wodensfield" (says Stow) is a mile north from Wolfrune Hampton, in Staffordshire."

together with Ecwils their king, and several others of their chief noblemen and leaders.

A. D. 912. This important victory was of great consequence to Edward, for at the same time that it damped the spirits of his enemies, it animated his friends, and secured him the love of his subjects, who looked upon him as their protector. Some time now elapsed in peace, the Danes not daring to renew the war, which time Edward prudently employed in fortifying his dominions, in order to secure them from the future attempts of his enemies.—In the year 912 died Æthered, the earl of Mercia, brother-in-law to Edward; and upon his decease, the king took the cities of London and Oxford, with the country adjoining, into his own hands, which had before been committed by his father,\* Ælfred, to the keeping of Æthered. The government of the other parts of Mercia, which Æthered had held, was still possessed by Æthelfled his widow, sister to king Edward, a woman of a courageous and martial spirit.†

A. D. 913. The following year, Edward repaired, or rebuilt, the town of Hertford, upon the river Lea, and leaving a sufficient number of people to carry on that work, he marched into Essex, and continued at Maldon whilst another town was building at Witham, about six miles from thence. These proceedings had such an effect upon the inhabitants round about, many of whom had long been in subjection to the Danes, that they yielded themselves to his protection, which he readily granted them.‡

A. D. 917. Four years more of peace elapsed, in which Edward used every endeavour, that art or policy could devise, to put the frontiers of his dominions in a better posture of defence than they had formerly been. But in the year 917, the Danes from Leicester and Northampton, having recruited their army, broke the peace, and marched into Oxfordshire, destroying several towns, and taking great spoils; whilst another party of the Danes, taking the advantage of the insurrection of their fellows, entered Herefordshire with the same intentions; but the inhabitants of that country united, gave battle to the insurgents, and beat them back, with the loss not only of the spoils they had taken in Herefordshire, but also of others elsewhere obtained, as well as a prodigious quantity of armour, which, in the confusion of their flight, they had left behind them.§

About the same time, Æthelfled, the governess of Mercia, sent a strong army into Wales, where the Mercians made war with great

\* Chron. Sax.

† Huntingdon, &c.

‡ Chron. Sax.

§ Ibid.

success,

success, and took from the Welsh a cattle belonging to them at Brienammere, near Brecknock, together with a great number of prisoners, amongst whom was the queen of that country.—Not long after, she led her army to Derby, at that time in possession of the Danes, which town she blocked up, and at last took by assault. For the encouragement of her soldiers, she commanded in person, and, during the action, was in such danger, that four officers of her body-guard were killed by her side; yet would she not desist, but persisted in making good the entrance.—This conduct of Æthelfled had such an effect upon the Danes who inhabited Yorkshire, and the northern environs of Mercia, that many of them voluntarily became her subjects, whilst the greater part of the rest submitted quietly to her, and entered into solemn engagements of peace\*.

The year ensuing, another strong party of the Danes came from their own country to England, and landed at Lidwie, in Devonshire, from whence they sailed westward round the Land's-End, and entered the river Severn. This army was conducted by two chiefs, named Ochtor and Hroald; they landed upon the Welsh coasts, where they pillaged the country, and from thence proceeded to the borders of Herefordshire, as far as Irchenfield, where they took prisoner a bishop, named Cameleac, and carried him with them to their ships. He was afterwards redeemed for the sum of forty pounds, which king Edward ordered to be paid to the Danes for that purpose†.

While these Danish forces were busy in pillaging the borders of Herefordshire, the people of that county rose in arms, and being joined by the inhabitants of Gloucestershire, they fell upon the Danes, and, after a bloody battle, put them to flight, with the loss of Hroald, one of their leaders, and the brother of Ochtor. The remnant that escaped took refuge in a wood, where, being surrounded by the Saxons, they were compelled to give hostages, and promise to depart immediately.—At the same time king Edward, with his army, lay not far off, upon the south of the Severn, in order to secure the passes in that part of the country, as far as the Avon. By this means the Danes were so confined, that they did not dare openly to make any attack upon the Saxon territories; however, they twice ventured, under cover of the night, to land, but were repulsed with such loss, that their numbers were greatly reduced; therefore, finding no hopes of succeeding, they embarked on board their ships, and failed to an island called Bradanrellice, where they were driven to such distress for want of food, that many of those who had escaped from the battle perished by famine; however, in the Autumn they left the island, and taking to their ships, went over into Ireland, where they resided‡.

A fresh party  
of the Danes  
arrive, and  
their success.

The Danes over-  
thrown.

\* Hen. Hunt. &c.

† Chron. Sax.

‡ Ibid.

Thurcytel, the Dane, submits to king Edward.

The same year king Edward, with his army, went to Buckingham, where he staid one month, and built two castles, one on each side of the Ouse; and before he left that place, Thurcytel, a Danish chief, with the leaders and principal people inhabiting Bedfordshire and Northampton, submitted themselves to him of their own accord, and sought his protection\*.

A. D. 919. The year following king Edward went with his army into Bedfordshire, and took possession of the town of Bedford, where he staid one month, and at the same time caused another town to be erected on the south side of the Ouse.

King Edward goes to Bedford

A. D. 920. The summer following the king went again to Maldon in Essex, which town he repaired and fortified. About the same time, Thurcytel, the Danish chief, having first obtained permission of the king, passed over into France, with as many of his countrymen as chose to follow his fortune†.—The prudent measures which Edward had pursued for the defence of his kingdoms, had been such, that this chief had but little hopes of making his stay in England advantageous to him; which, without doubt, was the cause of his leaving it, in search of more prosperous adventures.

Many Danes go to France.

A. D. 921. Early in the following year, king Edward rebuilt the city of Toseceaster‡, in Northamptonshire; he also constructed another city not far from it, called Wigingamere.—These proceedings alarming the Danes who inhabited Leicester and Northampton, they broke their covenants of peace soon after the departure of king Edward, and laid siege to Toseceaster, assailing it for the space of one whole day; but the inhabitants of the city valiantly defended themselves, and the people residing round about being alarmed, gathered an army together, and hastened to the relief of the besieged. The Danes therefore, fearful of the event, raised the siege by night, and retreated: but the besieged, being now joined by those succours which came to their assistance, pursued them with great alacrity, and surprized them at a place between Burnewuda and Æglesbyrig§. After a trifling skirmish, the Danes were entirely routed, and a great number of prisoners, as well as the greatest part of their cattle and baggage, fell into the hands of the Saxons||.

Danes break the peace, and their success.

Other Danes break the peace.

About the same time the Danes who inhabited Huntingdon (being joined by others from the kingdom of the East Angles) left their

\* Chron. Sax.

† Ibid.

‡ Now Towcester.

§ Birnwood and Ailbury; vide Milton Hist. Eng. fol. 256.

|| Chron. Sax.—Chron. Mar'n. S. 608.



former situation, and went to Temsford, where they built a strong fortification, and began from thence to make excursions, and annoy the bordering country. Not long after, they began their march to attack the city of Bedford; but the inhabitants of that city, assisted by some succours from the places adjoining, rushed on the enemy, and put them to flight with considerable loss\*.

Soon after the above expedition, a large army of the Danes, from Mercia and the East Angles, marched to the new-built city of Wigin- The Danes again over-  
thrown. gamere, to which they laid close siege for one whole day; but the garrison within resisted their efforts with such vigilance and bravery, that, having no hopes of success, they left the city, and retreated, driving away all the cattle which they found in their way.—These proceedings of the Danes enraged the Saxons, who, collecting an army from the different towns which lay round about the Danish fortification at Temsford, laid siege to that place, and took it by assault, notwithstanding the valiant resistance which was made by the Danes. The Saxons, in this engagement, slew the Danish king, together with Toglos and Mannan, two earls, and as many more as made resistance; the rest were taken prisoners, and carried away by the conquerors†.

The great success which had hitherto accompanied the attempts of the Saxons against their enemies, encouraged the inhabitants of Surrey, of Kent, and part of Essex, to unite their forces, and revenge, in some sort, the injuries they had sustained. They accordingly marched into Essex, and laid siege to the town of Colchester, in that county, Colchester taken from the  
Danes. which was then in possession of the Danes. The besieged made a long and gallant resistance; but at last, by the unwearied assiduity of the Saxons, it was won by assault, and all that were found therein were put to the sword. However, many of the Danes, when they found that the town could be no longer held, got away over the walls, and so escaped from the fury of the Saxons‡.

The town had not been long in the possession of the Saxons; before a strong party of the Danes arrived from the kingdom of the East The Danes again overcome. Angles to succour their countrymen, and oblige the Saxons to raise the siege; who seeing they came too late to be of any service, altered their course, and, going towards Maldon, besieged that town; but the Saxon forces from the adjacent places coming time enough to succour the inhabitants, the Danes left the place; but the Saxons pursued them with such alacrity, that they lost several thousand men in their retreat§.

In the mean time the main army, under the conduct of king Edward, The Danes submit to king  
Edward. marched to Pafham upon the Ouse, where they remained to guard the country whilst a stone wall was building round the city of Toseceaster.

\* Chron. Sax.

† Ibid.

‡ Chron. Sax.

§ Ibid.

Whilst Edward lay at Pasham, Thurferth, a Danish chief, with other lords, and their army, which lay round about the country to the north, as far as Weolud, came to him, and placed themselves under his protection. From thence he went with another part of his army (many of his forces having been dismissed at their earnest request) to Huntingdon, which city he repaired, and all the people round about the country returned again to their obedience, and sought his protection. After this the king went into Essex, and repaired the town of Colchester—After which all the Danes inhabiting the East or West Angles, submitted to king Edward; as did the army which lay at Grantbrige, all of them swearing allegiance to him both by sea and by land \*.

A. D. 922. The following Summer, king Edward marched his army to Stamford in Lincolnshire, where he built a strong fortress upon the south side of the river, and all the inhabitants round about that part of the country came thither, and voluntarily submitted to him †.

King Edward goes to Stamford.

The death of Æthelfled.

During the abode of Edward at Stamford, his sister Æthelfled, governess of Mercia, the widow of Æthered, the earl of that province, died at Tamworth in Warwickshire, and was buried in the monastery of St. Peter, in the town of Gloucester, founded in the life time of her husband by their joint consent and assistance.—This remarkable woman, after the decease of her husband, not only took upon her the government of Mercia, but also greatly assisted her brother in his wars, and contributed not a little to the suppression of the Danes. Such of these insurgents as lay round the borders of her dominions, she brought under subjection, and also conquered a part of the Welsh, as hath been already observed; and in order the better to secure her territories from the assaults and encroachments of her enemies, she prudently erected a great number of towns and fortresses in the most convenient places, which she supplied with strong garrisons, and proper ammunition ‡. She left behind her only one child (a daughter) at whose birth her pains were so violent that ever after she absented herself from her husband's bed, declaring she would not again expose herself to the like torture. This daughter did not succeed her mother in her government; for after the death of Æthelfled, king Edward took the whole kingdom of Mercia into his own hands §.

\* Chron. Sax.

† Ibid.

‡ Amongst the rest of her works, the following seem to be the chief. She repaired the city of Chester; and built the towns of Tamworth, Litchfield, Stafford, Warwick, Shrewsbury, Finborow, Weddesbury, Ed-

bury, and Legeceaster, besides a vast number of castles, &c. one of the chief of which was built upon the banks of the river Mersey, called Runcone; besides these she also made a bridge over the Severn.

§ Chron. Sax. &c.

No sooner was Edward possessed of Mercia, than Howell, Clelauc, and Jeothwel, kings of North Wales, submitted themselves to him; after which he went with his army to the town of Nottingham, which he repaired and fortified, when all the inhabitants of Mercia, as well Danes as Saxons, came thither and swore fealty to him\*.

The Mercians, and those of North Wales, submit to king Edward.

King Edward supported, with the highest degree of prudence, the great success that accompanied his expeditions; and the daily increase of his glory, so far from flattering his pride or vanity, or lulling him into a state of indolence, seems to have contributed to make him more assiduous in his endeavours to secure the peace of his subjects, and, with a powerful arm, to maintain the conquests he had won.—About the Autumn of the following year, in which he reduced the Mercians, he marched with his army into Cheshire, where he caused a town, called Thelwall, to be built and fortified; and whilst he abode there, another part of his army was sent from Mercia into Northumberland, in order to repair and fortify the town of Manchester †.

A. D. 923.

The prudence of king Edward.

About the middle of the following Summer, he went again to Nottingham, and built another town opposite to it, on the other side the river, over which he erected a bridge, in order to facilitate the communication between the town new built and the old one. From Nottingham he marched northward into the Picts land as far as a place called Bedecanwillan, where he also caused a city to be built, which he strongly fortified; and during his stay there, the king of the Scots did homage to him, as did all the Scottish nation.—At the same time Reginald and Eadulfes, two Danish princes, together with all the inhabitants of Northumberland, whether Saxons or Danes, submitted to him ‡; as did also the king of a certain people in those parts called Stræclædweala §, with all his subjects.

A. D. 924.

Northumberland, and other places, submit to king Edward.

The year following, after a glorious reign of twenty-five years, king Edward died, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, at a place called Farington in Berkshire. His body was conveyed to Winchester, and fo-

A. D. 925.

The death and burial of king Edward.

\* Sax. Chron.

† Ibid. &c.

‡ The homage thus done to king Edward was riot, says Milton, undeserved; for Buchanan himself confesses that he, with a small number of men compared to his enemies, overthrew, in a great battle, the whole united power of Scots and Danes, slew many of the Scottish nobility, and forced Malcomb, whom Constantine, the Scottish king, had made general, to save himself by flight, sore wounded—but he so

far confounds times and actions, as to make this battle the same with that fought by Æthelstan, A. D. 938. Milton, page 259. The Saxon annals make no mention of any battle, nor any other authentic writer.

§ These Camden thinks were part of the North Welsh inhabiting Stræcluid in Denbighshire; but says Milton, in his history of England, they were rather (perhaps) the British people of Cumberland.

lemnly buried in the new church there, founded by his father Ælfred, and compleated by himself.

The character  
of king Edward.

This noble prince far exceeded his father in power and extent of dominion; but he was not equal to him in learning. His valour, however, which he frequently exerted in the defence of his country, and the prudence with which he secured his conquests, made him justly amiable to his subjects. His disposition seems to have been mild and endearing\*, and his ambitious views were so bounded by moderation, that they always terminated in the welfare of his subjects, which seems at all times to have been the chief, if not the only object that excited his undertakings. Almost the whole island of Britain was subject to him, and the kings of the several parts payed him homage, so that none of his ancestors ever extended their conquests so far, or sat upon the throne with equal glory.

The concubine  
of king Edward.

King Edward had but two wives, for Egvinā, with whom he first cohabited, is said, by historians in general, to have been his concubine†. She was a lady of mean parentage, but of singular beauty, and had been brought up by the woman who nursed Edward while he was an infant. It one day happened, that, as he was hunting he called upon his nurse, where he beheld this damsel, and being smitten with her charms, took her secretly to his bed‡. Some have thought, and perhaps not unjustly, that he was really married to her, but because of her low birth, and that he feared the anger of his father, who was then living, the marriage was kept secret. However this may be, he had by her, according to report, two sons and one daughter.

Æthelstan§, the eldest son, succeeded his father in the kingdom, and he was, by Ælfred his grandfather, made a knight, which ceremony the king performed with his own hands.

\* This is strongly evinced (if the anecdote be true) by a quotation from William Mapœus given by Speed: "What time, says he, Edward the Elder lay at Austeline, and Leolin prince of Wales, at Bethesley, intending a parley - Leolin refused to come down, or to cross the Severn; whereupon Edward took boat, and entered the river towards him; which, when Leolin saw, and knew who he was, he cast off his rich robe wherewith he was clad, and which he had prepared for that royal assembly, and entered the river breast high, where, clasping the boat, with a submissive embrace, he said - 'Most sage king, thy humility hath overcome my insolence, and thy wisdom hath triumphed over my folly; come, sit upon my neck, which I have (fool as I am) lifted up against thee, so

' shalt thou enter into that land which thine benign mildness hath this day made thy own.' So after he had taken him upon his shoulders, and carried him on shore, he would needs have him sit down upon his royal robe, and so putting his hands jointly into his, did him homage. Speed Chron. p. 335."

† Alured Rivalen calls her "Nobilissima Fæmina Egvinā."

‡ This story is related by Malmſbury, and other writers. Vid. Malmſb. lib. 2. cap. 6. de Gestis Reg. Angl.

§ John Pike in vet. MS. Julius D. 6. says, that Æthelstan was the son of queen Elfſeta, wife of king Edward, and with him the author of the Scala Chronica agrees; and yet afterwards declares that Æthelstan was a bastard.

Ælfred,

Ælfred, the younger son, is said to have been beloved by his father Edward beyond any of his children, insomuch that he caused him to be crowned in his own life-time, and made him partner with him in the government; but he died soon after these honours were conferred upon him, and long before the death of his father. He was first buried in the monastery of Winchester, from whence he was afterwards removed to Hyde.

Editha, the daughter, was, in the life-time of her brother Æthelstan, married to Sithric, the Danish king of Northumberland.

The first wife of Edward was Elfred, the daughter of a Saxon earl named Ethelhelme, and supposed to have been a man of great repute in the court of Ælfred, being sent ambassador from that prince to Rome. By this lady he had two sons and six daughters.

*The first wife of Edward, and her issue.*

Elfward, or Ethelward, the eldest son, who was born in the beginning of his father's reign, was carefully educated and instructed in the liberal arts. The promising disposition of this young prince led many to expect that he would succeed his father in the throne, which appeared very probable; but dying suddenly a short time after him, at Oxford, he was carried to Winchester, and buried at the same place, and at the same time, with his father.

Edwine, the younger son, came to an unfortunate end, during the reign of his brother Æthelstan.

Elfreda, the eldest daughter, was a nun in the monastery of Ramsey, situated upon the banks of the river Test in Southamptonshire, where she became abbess, and there died, and was buried.

Egvina, the second daughter, was married to Charles the third, first named the Simple, king of France, by whom she had issue, Lewis the third, who was educated at the court of his uncle Æthelstan; and Gilet, a daughter, afterwards married to Rollo the Norman, who had with her the dukedom of Normandy confirmed upon him. Egvina survived her husband, and was afterwards married to Herbert, earl of Vermandys; but this marriage displeased the nobility, and also so much disgusted Lewis, her son, that he pursued her on her journey to meet her husband, and brought her back.

Ethelhild, the third daughter, took upon her the vow of virginity, and became a nun in the monastery of Wilton in the county of Wilts.

Eldelild, the fourth daughter, was married to Hugh the Great, earl of Paris, and constable of France, in the year 926, and died before her husband without any issue.

Edgith, the fifth daughter, was married to Otho, son of Henry, emperor of Saxony. She died before her husband at the city of Quedlingburgh in Saxony, the 27th of August, 947, and was buried in a chapel in the same city which herself had built.

Elgiva, the sixth and last daughter, was, with her sister, Edgith, sent into Saxony, where she was honourably entertained at the court of the emperor Henry, and was, after the marriage of her sister to Otho,

the emperor's son, herself married to an Italian nobleman, whose name is not recorded.

The second wife  
of king Edward,  
and his issue by  
her.

The second wife of king Edward was named Edgiva, the daughter of a Kentish earl named Sigeline. She was married to him in the year 916, being the sixteenth of his reign, and she out-lived him nearly forty years. By this lady he had two sons, and two daughters.

Edmund, the eldest son, was born in the year 921, and after the decease of his father, was educated under the immediate tuition of his mother. He succeeded his half brother Æthelstan in the kingdom.

Edred, the youngest son, was born in the year 923, being also educated under the inspection of his mother, and upon the death of his brother Edmund, he mounted the throne of Wessex.

Eadburg, the eldest daughter was, in her infancy, sent by her father to a monastery in Wiltshire, where she became a nun, and was famous for her piety. In the same monastery she died, and was buried. It is reported of this maiden, that her father made trial of her inclinations in the following extraordinary manner:—He caused to be set before her the richest dresses, with trinkets and jewels, and every requisite to adorn the person in the most sumptuous and attracting manner. He then shewed her the New Testament, with some other religious books, and bid her chuse whether she would rather have those fine ornaments, or the books. Though yet an infant, without any hesitation, she chose the books. This circumstance so highly delighted her father (who thought that the will of heaven concerning the child was thereby declared) that he caught her up in his arms in an extasy of joy, and kissed her, saying, "Go, in the name of God, whither he hath been pleased to call thee."—And accordingly he sent her instantly to the religious house.

Edgiva, the second and last daughter, is said to have been married to Lewis prince of Aquitaine.

## ÆTHELSTAN.

*The Eighth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

THE sudden death of Elfward, the elder son of Elfleda, first wife A. D. 925. of king Edward (who died so soon after his father as to be buried with him) caused an immediate alteration in the affairs of the state; <sup>Treason of Ælfred discovered</sup> for, as he was greatly beloved by the people, it was generally supposed that he would have succeeded his father. Edwine, the other son of king Edward by Elfleda, was too young to take upon him the administration of the affairs of the kingdom; and the two sons by his last wife, Edgiva, were as yet but infants. Æthelstan, his eldest son, (reported to be illegitimate) was therefore advanced to the throne\*, but not without a powerful opposition, which was formed against him in favour (as is supposed) of young Edwine.—The chief promoter of this sedition was a nobleman named Ælfred, who, with his accomplices, had determined to seize upon him whilst he abode at Winchester, and put out his eyes; but the plot being accidentally discovered to the friends of Æthelstan, he escaped their malice, and Ælfred, the principal conspirator, was taken into custody: but he positively denying his being concerned in any design against the prince, was, by his command, sent to Rome, that he might clear himself from the accusation by a solemn oath, which, on his arrival there, he took before the altar of Saint Peter, in the presence of pope John the Tenth. This oath was no sooner taken by Ælfred, than he fell down in strong convulsions, and being carried out of the church by his own servants, expired three days after, when the pope refused to permit him to be buried, until he had received permission to do it from Æthelstan†.

In the mean time Æthelstan, having thus escaped the snare which <sup>The coronation of Æthelstan.</sup> his enemies had laid for him, was, by his friends, conveyed to Kingston upon Thames, where he was crowned king, by Athelmus, archbishop of Canterbury, upon a high stage erected for that purpose in the

\* According to Malmshury, king Edward, by his last will, declared that Æthelstan should inherit the kingdom after him.

---Malmf. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 6.

† Malmsh. ut sup.

market-place, that he might be the better seen by the multitude, who expressed great joy and satisfaction at his advancement. The ceremonies attending his coronation are said to have been conducted with much more pomp and solemnity than had been used before for any one of his ancestors\*.—He began his reign in the year 925, the same in which his father deceased.

A. D. 926. Not long after the coronation of Æthelstan, the Danes who resided in Northumberland began to make fresh disturbances, and some of them, under the conduct of a chieftain (who bore the title of a king) named Reginald, besieged the city of York, and took it. In the mean time another Danish chief, named Sithric, murdered his brother Nigell, and usurping the dominion over the Northumbers, went with an army into Cheshire, and took Davenport, by force, from the Saxons.—What were the steps taken by Æthelstan and his subjects, in order to revenge this breach of peace, is not recorded; however, not long after, a peace was concluded between the Danes and the Saxons, and Editha, the sister of Æthelstan, was given in marriage to Sithric, who, as some report, upon that occasion embraced the Christian faith †.

A. D. 927. The year following the above marriage, Sithric died; and his two sons, Anlaf and Godfert (who were greatly offended at their father's renouncing his religion, which they imagined was done chiefly by the instigations of his wife) in order to revenge themselves, having persuaded the Northumbers to join them, they began hostilities in the north, and proceeded to open rebellion. Editha, Sithric's widowed queen, immediately after the death of her husband, returned to her brother, and being desirous of spending the remainder of her days in religious exercises, she obtained of her brother, by gift, a portion of ground at Tamworth in Warwickshire, where she built a monastery for nuns, and resided therein till her death ‡.—In the mean time Æthelstan, as soon as he received information of the death of Sithric, and of the mutiny of his two sons, marched with his army into Northumberland, where proving victorious, the rebellious parties were dispersed, and Anlaf fled into Ireland, whilst his brother Godfert took refuge in Scotland §.

\* Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 6.

† S. Dunelm.—Chron. Urivallensis.—Chron. Lindisforn, &c.

‡ The Scottish writers call this lady Beatrice, and fable of her, that she caused her husband to be poisoned, for which of-

fence she was taken by the two sons of Sithric, and put to a cruel death; in revenge of which, war was by the Saxons commenced against them. But all this is an idle tale, taken from Hector Boetius.

§ S. Dunelm, &c.



After this defeat, the Northumbers were reduced to obedience, and A. D. 932. some time elapsed in peace; so that Æthelstan had leisure to attend to his affairs at home, where the praises which were daily bestowed upon his brother Edwine excited his jealousy. This prince, who was now advancing towards manhood, was of such an amiable disposition, that he was highly beloved by the people in general. This alarmed the jealousy of Æthelstan, who, fearing perhaps that his brother might hereafter set up his claim against him, considered his seat on the throne as precarious, till some means were devised of removing Edwine from any attempts of that kind; and therefore he formed the design of destroying the hapless prince\*

The death of Æthelstan's brother.

Seven years after the defeat of the two sons of Sithric, Æthelstan A. D. 934. commenced war against the Scots; and the reason assigned for this undertaking was, that Constantine, the Scottish king, had openly received and protected the seditious Godfert, his enemy, and refused to deliver him up. He therefore, with a powerful army, and a large fleet of ships, attacked Scotland both by sea and land, and laid the country waste. His army, upon the land, proceeded as far as Dunfeeder and Watermore; and his fleet, by sea, as far as Caithness.—Constantine, seeing the alarming turn which his affairs had taken, was resolved to submit himself to Æthelstan, which Godfert being informed of, he made his escape from Scotland; and Constantine, joined by Eugenius, king of Cumberland, met Æthelstan at a place called Dacor, in that province, where they submitted themselves, and did him homage, offering him their crowns, which he restored to them.

The kings of Scotland and Cumberland do homage to Æthelstan.

\* The common story is, that this young prince was, by his brother's command, put into a little boat, without any tackle, accompanied by only one person, and in this condition sent out to sea. The prince, seeing no hopes of gaining the shore, in a fit of despair, cast himself overboard, and was drowned; but the attendant, being endued with more patience, making use of his hands (Malmfbury says his *feet*) by way of oars, at last regained the shore, and so saved his life. In the mean time the dead body of the prince being cast ashore upon the coast of Flanders, was taken up by Adulf, earl of Boloine, his cousin german, and (being known) was by him honourably interred.—However, some authors have endeavoured to make it appear that Æthelstan was quite innocent of the death of his bro-

ther, and particularly Milton; "for" (says he) "this very story Malmfbury" (the most authentic author by whom it is mentioned) "confesses to be sung in old songs, not read in warrantable authors; and Huntingdon speaks as of a sad accident to Æthelstan, that he lost his brother Edwine by sea, for the more credible is, that Æthelstan, as is written by all, tenderly loved and bred up the rest of his brethren, of whom he had no less cause to be jealous." Milt. p. 263.—However this may be, Æthelstan seemed to have lamented sorely his brother's death, and also sent great presents to Adulf, for the honourable interment which he had given to the dead body. Vide W. Malmfb. lib. 2. cap. 6.

Constantine,

A. D. 938. Constantine, however, notwithstanding this submission to Æthelstan, was highly exasperated at his invasion of Scotland, and, with a view of revenging the injuries he had sustained, he invited Anlaf\*, the other son of Sithric, who had taken refuge in Ireland, to come to his assistance. This invitation he cheerfully accepted, and, with 615 ships, came over to his aid. Constantine also persuaded the king of Cumberland to join him: so that, with the whole power of Scotland, and the assistance of those from Cumberland and Ireland, he thought himself sufficiently strong to throw off the mask of peace, and recommence hostilities against the Saxons. Accordingly, about four years after the commencement of the peace, which had been signed between Æthelstan and him, he and his confederates entered the Humber with their fleet, and began to destroy the neighbouring country.—Æthelstan in the mean time was not idle; for, on the first account of his enemies having taken the field against him, he assembled his army, and, in company with his brother Edmund, marched to oppose them. Both armies met at a place called Brunanburh, where was fought the bloodiest battle that had been recorded in the preceding annals of England; for it was supported, with great obstinacy on both sides, from the morning till the evening. Æthelstan, however, in the end proved victorious, although at the expence of many of his best soldiers; but on the vanquished side, the loss was prodigious. Five kings were slain upon the field of battle, together with seven of Anlaf's chief leaders, and Froda, a Norman earl †.—Anlaf, with the small remainder of his troops, fled to their ships, and returned to Ireland. As for Constantine, according to the report of some authors, he was slain in the battle ‡; but others affirm that he escaped §, and was afterwards restored to his throne by the clemency of Æthelstan, who at the same time declared, that it was more honourable to make a king than to be one ||.

After the battle of Brunanburh, Æthelstan marched with his army into North Wales, where he overcame Ludwal, the Welsh king, and conquered the country; but he afterwards restored Ludwal to his throne, who did him homage at the city of Hereford, and covenanted to pay him yearly a tribute of twenty pounds of gold, three hundred pounds of silver, and twenty-five thousand head of oxen ¶, besides a certain number of hawks and hunting dogs.

\* Some stile him king of Ireland and the Isles; vid. Malmsh.

† Thus says the Saxon Chronicle; but Malmshury says five kings and twelve leaders.

‡ Chron. Urivallen. Monast. S. Dunelm. &c.

§ Chron. Sax.

|| Malmsh. de Gest. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 6.

¶ Thus Malmsh.—The Chron. Urivallen. has it, "Quinque millia bestiarum." The same also an old French MS. in the Cotton Library, mark'd Galba, E. 3. has it, "V. mille vaches."

Upon his return home to Wessex, Æthelstan expelled the Cornish Britons from the city of Exeter, and drove them further towards the west, making the river Tamar the boundary of his dominions; so that his territories were more extensive than even those of his father Edward had been\*.

Three years after the battle of Brunanburh, Æthelstan died at the town of Glocester, the seventeenth day of October, A. D. 941, after an honourable reign of sixteen years, and was buried with all due ceremonies at Malmesbury†.—Æthelstan was thirty years of age when he came to the crown, and forty-six when he died; but it does not appear that he was ever married, or that he left any children behind him‡.

The death and burial of Æthelstan.

Æthelstan was a man of middling stature, extremely well made, of a comely and chearful countenance, and of a graceful carriage: his hair was yellow, which in those days was esteemed a beautiful ornament§.—The courteous disposition of this prince obtained him the love of his friends and his subjects, whilst his valour and intrepidity in the field made him dreaded by his enemies. In his highest prosperity his moderation was admirable, for when he had conquered his foes he forgave them.—His policy and piety are no less remarkable; and, if we can but suppose him innocent of the death of his brother Edwine, his whole character will be without a blemish.—In short, such was the glory with which he held the scepter of his ancestors, that several foreign princes sought an alliance with him, some of them marrying his sisters, and others sending him rich and valuable presents.

The person and character of Æthelstan.

\* The author of the Book of Lindisfarne, quoted by Leland, scruples not to say, "Æthelstanus, rex primus omnium totius Britanniae, monarchiam obtinuit." Also other authors have declared, that he was the first sole monarch of all the island of Britain.

† Malmesbury, Chron. T. Redbourn, Bromton, &c.

‡ John Rous and others have said that he had a daughter, named *Leoneat*, married

to Reynburne, earl of Warwick, son of the great Guy of Warwick; but the whole of this is but a suspected story.—Vide Speed's Chron. page 342.

§ He was, says an old French MS. chronicle of England, "Le plus beau bachelier, ke pout estre & mellur de sun cors & personage, cist on Engleterre," &c.—MS. in the Cotton library, marked Galba, E. 3.

## E D M U N D.

*The Ninth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 941. **U**PON the decease of Æthelstan, his brother Edmund, then but eighteen years of age, succeeded to the throne, and was crowned, with great pomp, at Kingston upon Thames, in the year 941; nor was his youth any objection to his advancement, for his valour had been tried at the battle of Brunanburh, where he commanded under his brother, and obtained a large share in the honour of that signal victory.

Edmund succeeds his brother.

A. D. 942. Soon after his coronation, the Danes who were quartered in Mercia began to make some disturbance in that province; but the year following they were subdued by Edmund, who took from them the towns of Lincoln, Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, and Stamford, and brought all Mercia entirely under his subjection.—In the mean time a chief, named Anlaf\*, came into Northumberland with a powerful army, and, being joined by the Danes who inhabited those parts, marched southward from the city of York, wasting the country and pillaging the people. They extended their march to Northampton, which city they took, and were met by king Edmund and his army at Leicester. Here a peace was concluded upon without any blood-shed, by the intreaties and management of Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, and Wulfstan, archbishop of York, by which it was agreed that Anlaf was to hold all the country to the north of Watling-Street. The same year Anlaf received baptism, and king Edmund was sponsor at the font for him. At the same time he held Regenolde, another Danish king, whilst the bishop confirmed him †.

The Danes lose several cities.

\* By all that can be gathered from the different accounts of these and the two following years transactions, it appears very plain, that this Anlaf could not be the same with him that was the son of Sithric, who had been so troublesome to Æthelstan, and who also began a new revolt, A. D. 944,

and was put to flight by Edmund. Huntingdon declares he was another, and the Saxon Chronicle seems to distinguish them by calling the latter "*Anlaf, son of Sithric*," "*Anlaf, Sythricer runn*."—

Vide sub an. 944.

† S. Dunelm, &c.

Anlaf,

Anlaf, king of the Northumbrian Danes, died, as it appears, the year A. D. 944. after his baptism, and after him, Anlaf, the son of Sithric before-mentioned, was received by the Danes as their king. He joined Rege-<sup>Northumber-</sup>nald, the son of Guthwurthes, and began a fresh disturbance in the land conquered in the North, which obliged king Edmund to take the field again. He marched with his army into Northumberland the year following, where he fought with such success, that he effectually quelled the disturbance, and compelled the two ringleaders of the revolt, Anlaf and Regenald, to leave the land\*; at the same time he took the government of Northumberland into his own hands, and held it without the assistance of a viceroy †.

The next year king Edmund, assisted by Leolin, king of North A. D. 945. Wales, entered Cumberland, which was at this time a kingdom by itself, and inhabited by a set of people who took every opportunity of plundering the Saxon borders, and thereby occasioned this expedition of Edmund. The Cumbrian forces were soon overthrown, and the whole country was subdued by Edmund ‡, who gave it to Malculme, king of Scotland, to hold of him; and Malculme was thereby bound to assist him in his wars, either by sea or land.—Having thus prudently secured the northern parts of his dominions, from whence the most frequent irruptions sprang, he returned to Wessex, and there established several salutary laws for the advantage of his subjects §.

The following year king Edmund was slain by a very remarkable A. D. 946. accident. As he was sitting at dinner with his nobles, on Saint Augustine's day, at Puclechurh in Gloucestershire ¶, he saw a thief, named Leof, whom he had condemned to exile, sitting at the table with the rest of the guests, when, arising instantly from his seat in great anger, he seized upon the culprit, and threw him to the ground. Leof, imagining, from this rough usage, that the king intended to kill him, drew a knife and stabbed him in the breast, when the king instantly expired. The attendants, perceiving that the king was slain, presently surrounded the murderer, and killed him, but not till he had wounded several of those who were the foremost to attack him. The body of the king was taken up, and afterwards buried at Glastonbury ¶¶ with all due solemnities. He was murdered in the twenty-third year of his

The death of king Edmund.

\* Chron. Sax. sub an. 944.

† *Subregulus*, as in the old historians.

‡ Mat. West. says, that Dunmail, king of Cumberland, fled the kingdom, but his two sons were taken by Edmund, who caused their eyes to be put out.—Mat. West. sub. an. 946.

§ These laws are yet extant.

¶ An old French MS. chronicle in the Cotton Library, marked Galba, B. 3. and Will. Thorne, make this accident to have happened at *Canterbury*.—Vide Chron. W. Thorne, cap. 5. sect. 9.

¶¶ W. Thorne says it was carried to *Wynton* to be buried.—Vide ut sup.

age, after he had reigned rather better than five years ; and his death was universally lamented by his subjects.

The character  
of Edmund.

Edmund was a young man of invincible courage, joined with singular prudence ; his disposition was noble and generous, his behaviour courteous and winning, and all his actions just and equitable. These virtues, which so evidently displayed themselves in his short reign, caused him to be highly revered by his subjects, who were thence led to form the greatest expectations from his future administration.

The wife and  
issue of king  
Edmund.

The wife of Edmund was named Elfgifa, to whom he was married in the year 941, and in the first of his reign. The parentage of this lady is not recorded ; but she survived him many years, leading a life of such exemplary piety, that, after her death, she was honoured with the appellation of saint.—By this lady Edmund had two sons, who were too young immediately to succeed him in the throne ; but, after the death of their uncle Eadred, they received that honour.

E A D R E D.

## E A D R E D.

*The Tenth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

**E**ADWIG and Eadgar, the two sons of Edmund, being too young A. D. 946. to take upon them the charge of the government, Eadred, their uncle, the youngest son of king Edward, was appointed their protector; but he soon afterwards assumed to himself the regal dignity, and was crowned at Kingston, the seventeenth day of August, in the year 946, by the hands of Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, being then in the twenty-third year of his age\*.

The crown was but just placed upon the head of Eadred, when the inhabitants of Northumberland began a dangerous insurrection, notwithstanding the covenant which had been made between the late king Edmund and Malculme king of Scotland, by which the latter stood engaged to keep them in peace. Eadred, therefore, no sooner heard of the revolt, than he marched with his army into the north, and having entirely subdued the turbulent Northumbrians, he entered Scotland, where he met not with the least resistance; but, on the contrary, was shortly after joined by Malculme, who, with all his subjects, submitted to him, and took an oath of allegiance. These proceedings soon established a peace, which was confirmed between the Saxons, the Northumbrians, and the Scots.—The commotions thus appeased, Eadred returned with his army into Wessex †.

No sooner was Eadred departed, but the Northumbrians, entirely A. D. 947. regardless of the conditions of the peace which had been concluded between them and the Saxons, sent pressing invitations again into Ireland, to Anlaf the son of Sithric, which he complied with, and, with a powerful army, entered Northumberland, where he was soon chosen king. This title and dignity he held four years ‡ unmolested by Eadred, who probably, knowing the changeable disposition of the Northumbrians, waited quietly to see what turn the affairs of that kingdom would take, and till a more favourable opportunity might

\* Chron. Sax. S. Dunelm.

† S. Dunelm, &amp;c.

‡ Ibid. et Chron. Lindisforne, et Chron. Urivallen. &amp;c.

offer.

offer for him to attack them, when they had weakened themselves by intestine discords; which, in fact, shortly after was the case.

A. D. 951. The Northumbrians, after four years peace, began to be dissatisfied with the king they themselves had so lately chosen; so that forming strong parties against him, they at last deposed him, and pursued him with such rigour, that he was obliged once more to quit the kingdom, and take refuge in Ireland, his former asylum. In the mean time, the rebellious Northumbrians set up another chieftain named Eoric to govern them in his stead. Whilst these feuds were agitating, Eadred collected his army together, and marched into Northumberland, considering this as a very favourable opportunity to reduce them to obedience. The Northumbrians hearing of his approach, retreated before him, so that he entered the country without meeting any resistance. Enraged at this policy, he proceeded to waste the kingdom with fire and sword, in order to provoke them to the field; but when he found that all his endeavours were fruitless, though he had destroyed many places, and burnt the monastery of Rippon to the ground\*, he ordered his army to return home. As the soldiers were upon their march, which was negligently made, some parties straggling here and there (not in the least expecting to meet with any resistance from an enemy who had hitherto fled before them) the rear ward was attacked by the Northumbrians, under the conduct of Eoric their king, who had diligently watched their motions, and kept himself ready to fall upon them if he could do it advantageously. The Saxons were thus surprised by the policy of Eoric, and a considerable number of them were slain before they could gain the main body of the army, or arrange themselves in proper order. These proceedings so highly exasperated Eadred, that he instantly resolved upon returning into the North, at the same time threatening great revenge, which being made known to the Northumbrians, and fearing that those threats should be put in execution, they deposed Eoric their king, and slew Amanaus, the son of Anlaf, one of their chiefs. They then dispatched messengers to Eadred, with many valuable presents, at the same time declaring their willingness to submit themselves to his government. This method of proceeding had the desired effect; for Eadred, pleased with the gifts which he had received, accepted of their submission, and a peace was soon after concluded between both parties.—From this time the whole kingdom of Northumberland ceased to be governed by kings of their own, and the management of that state was committed to the care of earls, who were elected for that purpose; and Osulph was, by Eadred's command, the first that assumed that office †.

The dissensions  
in Northum-  
berland brought  
to an end.

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid. & Chron. Lindisforme, & Chron. Urivallen, &c.



The same year Wulfstan, archbishop of York, was suspected of having countenanced the revolt of the Northumbers\*, and was likewise accused of being accessary to the murder of some citizens of Thetford in revenge of the death of Adelm an abbot, who had been slain in that city some time before.—On these suspicions, Eadred caused him to be committed to prison; however, not long after the establishment of the peace between the Saxons and the Northumbers, he was set at liberty, and restored to his former dignity †.

Eadred, after his return from his second expedition into Northumbria, A. D. 955. berland, enjoyed his crown in perfect tranquillity for the space of four years, which he spent not idly; for he seems to have been anxious for the welfare of his subjects, being a strict observer of the laws, and an impartial administrator of justice. But falling sick in the very flower of his youth, he died, greatly lamented by his subjects, in the year 955, after a short reign of nine years, and in the thirty-second of his age, when his body was buried in the cathedral church of Winchester ‡.

In valour and in prudence this prince equalled any of his brethren, in piety and religious duties he excelled them; it is true indeed that he was often led by his zeal for religion to give countenance to various idle superstitions, for he not only submitted to all the decrees of the clergy, but suffered even his own body to be chastised by Dunstan, abbot of Glasterbury, who stood very high in his favour. His steady adherence to justice, and the protection which he constantly afforded to the distressed, justly entitled him to the esteem which he enjoyed whilst living, and the good report that was made of him after his decease.

The wife of Eadred is not mentioned in the ancient records; but it appears that he had two sons, one named Ælfred, and the other Beorhtferd, who are only known by their names being annexed to certain charters of their father's §.

\* W. Malmesbury.

† S. Dunelm.

‡ J. Redbourne.

§ These charters are yet extant, amongst

various others, in an old MS preserved in the Cotton Lib. marked Cladius B. vi. After this name is put "fl. regis," which is authority sufficient.

The archbishop of York imprisoned.

The death of Eadred.

Character of Eadred.

The issue of Eadred.

## EADWIG, or EDWYN.

*The eleventh Monarchy of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 955. **A**FTER the death of Eadred, his nephew Eadwig, the eldest son of Edmund, succeeded to the throne. He was crowned at Kingston by Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 955, being at that time but just turned of thirteen years of age. The ancient authors, in general, have accused this young prince of great irregularities, and scruple not to declare that on the very day of his coronation, he withdrew himself from the company of his nobles, in order to wanton privately with a near kinswoman of his\*, who had prostituted herself to him. This proceeding of the king offended the nobility in general, but more especially the clergy, who sent Dunstan, the boldest man amongst them, to persuade the king from the embraces of his favourite. Dunstan accordingly, with great resolution, entered the chamber where the king and Ælfgifa (for so the lady was named) were sitting, and after rebuking her very severely, he laid hold of the king's hand, and, by force and persuasion, led him back to the banquet.

The coronation  
of Eadwig.

A. D. 956. However, though the boldness which Dunstan had shewn was at that time over-looked, it remained fixed in the memory of Ælfgifa, who never ceased to persuade the king against him, till she prevailed on him to consent to his banishment, which the year following she accomplished†. The revenge of Ælfgifa stopped not here; for the suf-

Dunstan banished  
the king-  
dom.

\* Here we should note, that Henry Huntingdon mentions this prince in a much more favourable light. The account as here given is from William of Malmbury, who was likely more severe than just in the delineation of Eadwig's character; and that because the monastery of Malmbury wherein himself was brought up was, by this prince, given to the secular priests, or as he terms it, "made a stable of clerks." Modern authors have villified the character of Eadwig still more by saying, that on this day he ravished this kinswoman against her will, she being the wife of a nobleman of his realm, and that he afterwards caused

her husband to be slain that he might the more securely enjoy her;—but the story may well be exploded, since not mentioned even by his enemy W. Mamsb. Others allowing the account given above, say, he cohabited with the mother of the harlot also.

† Perhaps the true reason of Dunstan's banishment was, because he could not give so clear an account of the treasure, which had been committed to his charge by king Edmund, as could have been expected; but on this head more will be said hereafter in the Ecclesiastical History, part the 2d of this volume.

ferred

ferred Eadwig to take no repose till she had inspired him with a settled hatred for all the monks. The monastery where Dunstan had resided was stripped of all that was valuable, and the monastery of Malmesbury was given to the secular priests\*.

Some time after, Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, pronounced a separation between the king and his favourite Ælfgifa, which he was, at length, obliged to submit to. Notwithstanding which, the affronts he had put upon the clergy, and the constant misinterpretations that were made of all his actions, alienated the hearts of his subjects, but more especially those of Mercia and Northumberland, who openly revolted, and set up his brother Eadgar as king over them, though then a youth of only fourteen years of age; so that to Eadwig was left only the kingdom of Wessex, bounded by the river Thames.

Eadwig loses great part of his kingdom.

These proceedings of his subjects, which he could by no means prevent, had such an effect upon the spirits of Eadwig, that he pined away with grief, and, about two years after the advancement of his brother, died of a broken heart early in the beginning of the year 959. His body was entered at Winchester in a new abbey called Hyde, erected without the walls of that city.

The death, &c. of Eadwig.

It would be to no purpose to attempt to delineate the character of this prince, since the monks (who are the only historians of those times) were his professed enemies—therefore all his virtues were undoubtedly obscured, his good intentions misinterpreted, and his vices exposed in the most aggravated colours; in short, we may, with some justice conclude, that he was not really so bad as he is represented. All that can be added of certainty is, that his person was so perfectly beautiful, that the epithet of Fair was bestowed upon him. It does not appear that he left any issue behind him †.

His character difficult to draw, and why.

\* W. Malmsh. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 7.

† What became of this lady after the separation is not, I believe, recorded;—but, notwithstanding the above account, some authors have positively asserted that she was his lawful wife. Thus Speed, quoting John Capgrave, declares as follows: “ Ælfgive, his wife, was a lady of singular beauty, nobly descended; some say rather too near a relation. Her father’s name is not recorded, but her mo-

“ ther was called Ethelgive. She has by some been scandalized as his concubine, and the only cause of Dunstan’s banishment. However, the monks thought proper to find fault with his marriage, so that an. 3. they forced her to a separation:”—but of all this the authentic authors make no mention; therefore the account must stand as above, until some better authority shall be found than the Legends of Capgrave. Vide Speed, Chron. fol. 348.

EADGAR, *sirnamed The PEACEABLE.**The Twelfth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 959.

Eadgar succeeds his brother.

ON the death of Eadwig, Eadgar his brother, who before ruled all Mercia and Northumberland; succeeded to the government of the whole kingdom of England, being at that time only in the sixteenth year of his age. He no sooner ascended the throne than he called Dunstan out of Flanders (where he had made his abode during the time of his exile) and made him one of his chief counsellors\*; his others were Ethelwold, abbot of Glastonbury, and Oswald, bishop of Worcester, every one of them great favourers of the monks, and professed enemies to the secular clergy. By their advice, Eadgar restored all those honours to the monks which they had been deprived of by his brother; by which means he soon obtained their commendations.

The prudence of Eadgar.

All the time this prince sat upon the throne, a profound peace continued throughout his dominions, for which reason he obtained the surname Peaceable; but though he was undisturbed by any war, yet was he always well prepared to defend his territories from the attempts of his enemies, if their inclinations should lead them to commence hostilities; and he not only secured the internal parts of his dominion, but also prudently took care to guard the sea coasts from the attacks of any foreign power; to effect which, he provided a vast fleet of ships†, which he divided into four several squadrons. These were stationed at appointed distances from each other, sailing North, East, South, and West; and after they had reached the bounds assigned them, they returned, and met each other at the place from whence they first set out. In the Summer time, Eadgar himself would usually sail with one squadron or other, and see that their duty was properly attended to‡.

His justice.

During the Winter season, Eadgar usually made the circuit of his kingdom, and visited all the chief courts of justice to see that a due

\* Malmesbury, &amp;c.

† Hoveden, and others, say, this fleet consisted of 3600 sail of ships; but Math.

of Westminster extends their number to 4800.

‡ W. Malmesbury de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 8.



regard was payed to the laws, and that justice was equally administered by the magistrates \*. Such as he found assiduous and careful he rewarded; but, on the contrary, he punished those most severely whom he found neglectful or unjust; and as he was a constant friend and protector to the poor and oppressed, so was he as strict in bringing to justice those who were indolent and dishonest, by which means thieves and vagabonds were almost totally suppressed. Neither would he permit any little straggling alehouses to be kept within his dominions, justly esteeming them as nurseries of indolence and vice; but made a strict law, ordaining that only one public house should be allowed in any one village or small town, and more only in proportion to the size of larger towns or boroughs. In order also to stop the progress of inordinate drinking, which the English had learned of the Danes, such regulations as were necessary were, at the same time, ordained †.

Instead of the tribute which Æthelstan had imposed upon the Welsh, Eadgar demanded yearly to be sent to him the skins of three hundred wolves; by which means (without any expence to his subjects) the whole land was, in the space of little more than two years, cleared from those rapacious animals by which it had formerly been much infested ‡.

Thus did Eadgar keep his kingdom in constant peace and felicity, and restored such good order amongst his subjects that great excesses, pilfering, robberies, or murder, or other calamities (the effects of the neglect of justice, and the due attention which ought to be paid to the execution of the laws) were seldom heard of throughout his dominions; and these prudent proceedings not only secured him the hearts of his subjects, but rendered him terrible to his enemies, and highly consequential to those who were tributary to him.

It may seem extraordinary (yet from the best authorities it appears A. D. 973. to have been true) that Eadgar, notwithstanding he entered upon the government of the kingdom immediately after the death of his brother, and took upon him the title and dignity of a king, yet he was not crowned until the year 973, being the thirtieth year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign §, when this ceremony was performed at Bath, with great splendour, by Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of all the nobles of the realm ||.

\* Ibid.

† Malmesbury, &c.

‡ Ibid.

§ The only reason that can be collected from ancient records for this delay is, that it was enjoined him by way of penance for the faults which he had committed in his amours.

|| Chron. Sax. sub. an. 973. & Wil. Malmesb. lib. 2. cap. 8.—Polydore Vergil confidently affirms, that Eadgar was crowned in the first year of his reign before the return of Dunstan from his exile; but on what authority this opinion is grounded, we are left in the dark.

A. D. 974. Eadgar, the year after his coronation, went to Chefter, where he summoned all the kings, who were tributary to him, to attend him, which they obeyed, and there did him homage. They were eight in number, and their names are recorded as follow: Kunadius king of Scotland, Malcolme king of Cumberland, Maccusse king of Man and the islands \*, with Dufwal, Hewal, Giferth, Jacob, and Judethal, all five kings of Wales.—After these princes had done him homage, he caused every one of them to take an oar, and, entering with them into a boat, was by them rowed upon the river Dee, whilst himself sat at the helm and steered; at the same time vain-gloriously exulting, that his descendants might truly stile themselves kings of England, when they enjoyed such honours as were granted to him †.

A. D. 975. The duration of human glory is so short and transitory, that they who enjoy it, in the greatest degree, ought not to be vainly ostentatious, but should still remember, that, while they are boasting, they may be standing upon the verge of ruin. So was it with the English, who, during the reign of Eadgar, thought their happiness complete; but, after his death, the state fell suddenly into decay, when their enemies became conquerors, and triumphed in their turns.—Eadgar was snatched away from his people in the very prime of his life and the zenith of his glory. His death happened in the month of July, in the year 975, the thirty-second of his age, and the sixteenth of his reign, when his remains were interred with great pomp at the abbey of Glas-tonbury.

The person of Eadgar. Eadgar was a man of small stature, and slender of body, yet his limbs were very strong and well made, so that he was able to contend with men much larger and stouter than himself, which he would frequently do, desiring them to exert their utmost abilities to overcome him, without paying the least compliment to his dignity ‡.

\* Malsbury stiles him "*Archipiratum Maccusum*"—Lib. 2. cap. 8.

† About the same time Eadgar gave many rich presents to the king of Scotland, particularly the whole country of Louthian, to hold of him, on condition that he and his successors should repair to the English court at high festivals, when the king sat crowned, and gave him also many lodging places by the way, which, till the days of Henry the Second, were held by the kings of Scotland.—Milton's Hist. p. 276.

‡ The following remarkable story is told of this prince:—That one day, the king of Scotland, while he was sitting at table at

the court of Eadgar, cast some reflection upon his smallness of stature; which being told him again, he called the king of Scotland aside, and shewing him two swords, bid him take one, "for (says he) we will now try who ought to be subject to the other;" adding, at the same time, that it was a shame for a king to boast at his table, and shrink from the battle. The king of Scotland, ashamed of what had been said, which he found had been told to Eadgar, fell down at his feet, and besought him to pardon what he had unwittingly spoken, without the least intention of disparagement to him.—Malmf. ut sup.

Eadgar may justly be esteemed a valiant and a political prince. His disposition appears to have been courteous, and his behaviour cheerful and agreeable. He was endued with many virtues, and possessed the chief requisites of majesty, as mercy and justice; but, on the other hand, his inordinate love of women frequently led him to commit such actions as will always remain as blemishes to his character, notwithstanding some authors have attempted to extenuate them.—In religious opinions, he appears to have been bigotted in favour of the Monkish clergy, whose parts he at all times took against the Secular priests, whom he has been thought sometimes to have treated too severely. He is also accused of being more favourable to foreigners than was consistent with the interest or welfare of his own subjects\*.

Eadgar's first wife was named Ethelfleda, a lady so fair that she was surnamed the White†. She was the daughter of a nobleman named Ordmar (who resided in the kingdom of the East Angles) and said to have been married to Eadgar in the second year of his reign: it is also reported that she died two years after her marriage, A. D. 963.—The most authentic authors‡ have not denied that this lady was the lawful wife of king Eadgar; yet, notwithstanding this, some writers of later times have disputed this point§, declaring that he violated her chastity, and made her his concubine; at the same time avowing that the young prince Edward, who appears to be the only child that Eadgar had by her, was illegitimate; they further add, that, for the injury which Eadgar had done to this lady, his coronation (by way of penance) was deferred seven years||. But surely, after all they have said upon this head, they have advanced no argument of authority enough to overturn the repeated affirmations of several ancient writers, who have positively declared themselves in her favour¶.

Edward, the only child that Ethelfleda bore to Eadgar, succeeded his father in the kingdom.

The second wife of Eadgar, was called Elfrida, the daughter of Ordgarus, a duke of Devonshire. She was a lady of such exquisite beauty, that her praises were frequently repeated at Eadgar's court, and at last reached the king's ears (who had not long, it seems, been left a widower, by the death of Ethelfleda) and he, being struck with

\* For, says Malmshury, of the *foreign Saxons* the English people learned rudeness, of the *Flemish* daintiness and softness, and of the *Danes* drunkenness.

† In Saxon, *Hwæt*, by the Latin authors, *Candidus*.

‡ W. Malmshury, Rog. Hoveden, Mat. West. Randulf Higden, Henry de Knyghton, &c.

§ John Paris.---Osborn in Vita S. Dunstani.

|| Fox in his Book of Martyrs, Speed's Chronicle, &c.

¶ Ranulf. Higd. Mat. West. Hen. de Knyghton, &c.



the accounts that he had heard of her, was desirous of examining further into the truth of these reports; he therefore commissioned a certain nobleman of his court, named Ethelwold, to go to her father's house, and contrive some method of seeing the lady, and, if he found her as beautiful as she had been reported to be, he should declare to her father, that the king was desirous to make her his queen.—Ethelwold, thus commissioned by his sovereign, went instantly into Devonshire, and saw the lady; when, being himself smitten with her charms, he entirely neglected the commands of his master, and preferred his own suit to the lady, by whom he was graciously received, and the father consenting, he obtained her in marriage.—In the mean time he returned to the court, and made so cold a report of her beauty to the king, that he quietly dropped all further thoughts concerning her, until some time after the marriage of Ethelwold, when he was informed of his treachery by some of that nobleman's enemies. Eadgar was highly provoked at the unfaithfulness of his servant, but dissimbling his resentment, he told him it was his intention to visit him and his bride. Ethelwold accepted of the invitation with all appearance of joy, but hastened home, to be there before the arrival of the king; and having first informed his wife of the deceit which he had practised to obtain her, intreated her to dress herself in the most unbecoming manner she could, as his life depended thereon.—Elfrida, angry that she had thus been deprived of a throne, in order to revenge herself upon her husband, dressed herself with the utmost pomp, and set off all her charms to the greatest advantage. Her art had the desired effect; for Eadgar no sooner beheld her, than he was smitten to the heart by her beauty, and therefore determined to punish the deceit of Ethelwold, which he effected soon after, as he was hunting with the unfortunate nobleman in the forest of Harewood, where he ran him through with a dart \*. Soon after the death of Ethelwold, he married Elfreda †, and by her had issue two sons.

Issue by his second wife.

Edmund, the eldest son of Eadgar, by Elfrida, was born in the sixth year of his father's reign, A. D. 965, and died in his infancy, in the year 971, being then but just six years of age. His body was buried, with all due ceremonies, at a monastery of nuns, at Ramsay in Hampshire, which had been founded by his father.

\* Malmsbury declares, that a base son of Ethelwold's happened to pass by at the same time, and the king sternly asked him "how he liked that sort of hunting;" to which he submissively answered, "that, if it pleased the king, it might not displease him." His answer so much pleased Eadgar,

that he took an affection for him, and advanced him high in his favour, endeavouring by that means to make him amends for the loss of his father.

† Malmsb. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 8. &c. &c.

Ethelred,

Ethelred, the youngest son of Elfrida, was born in the seventh year of his father's reign, A. D. 966. After the murder of his brother Edward, he succeeded to the throne.

The first instance of the lasciviousness of Eadgar, was his violating the chastity of a virgin, named Wolfhild, whom he took forcibly from a nunnery, where she had been placed to avoid his pursuits; for which fault he was most severely reprehended by Dunstan, and obliged to do a penance of seven years, by having his coronation so long deferred. And this is most likely to have occasioned that penance, rather than that cause before-mentioned, admitting that Ethelfleda had really been the concubine of Eadgar, and not his wife, not only because it is affirmed by the best authors \*, but because the crime in itself would doubtless have been esteemed greater in the violation of Wolfhild than of Ethelfleda; for, in the former case, the decrees of the church were trampled upon, which of course would make the clergy more outrageous.

By Wolfhild, Eadgar had one child, a daughter, named Edgitha, who was afterwards a veiled nun in the monastery of Wilton, and, as it seems, was made abbess there, at fifteen years of age, by her father. She died the fifteenth day of September, in the year 954, aged twenty-three. She was very beautiful, but so chaste and pious, that after her death she obtained the title of saint †.

After the death of Ethelfleda, the first wife of Eadgar, report was made to him concerning the beauty of a young virgin, the daughter of the duke of Andover. Being taken with the commendations he had heard bestowed upon her, he went to her father's house, where he saw her, and being pleased with her person, demanded that she might be brought to his bed. The mother of the damsel, anxious for the honour of her child, was determined (although at the hazard of her life) by some deceit to evade the cruel command, which she dared not openly to resist; for this purpose she suborned a young female servant of her household, and led her in the dark to the king's bed.—In the morning the damsel was hastening to arise, when the king detained her, demanding why she hurried from him; to which she replied, that the task which her mistress had assigned her was great, so that she should scarcely find time to perform it. The king was amazed at this declaration; but the damsel, kneeling down, informed him, that, at the command of her mistress, she had supplied her daughter's place; and besought him, that, since she had been so highly honoured as to be advanced to her sovereign's bed, she might no longer be subject to the hard service that her mistress imposed upon her. The king, though much moved at the deceit which had been put upon him,

Eadgar's lasciviousness.

His issue by Wolfhild.

The deceit put upon king Eadgar.

\* Malmsb. Hoveden, Mat. West. &c.  
&c.

† Ibid,

disguised his resentment, and took the damsel home with him, whom he loved tenderly, and continued true to her bed until he married his second wife, Elfreda\*. But it does not appear that he had any issue during his intercourse with this woman.

\* Malmsh. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 8. &c.---Thus an old French chronicle informs us, that Eadgar was *geune bacheler home de grant valur e bunte ame de deu e de tut ben gent*; after adding, *Nul ne se font ne nepout blamer si de treys choses; nun del cunte Ethelword; edel duc Dondore; ede la Monerne, kil treiff a force de sa abbe pur sa beaute*, &c. which may be thus Englished: "A young man of great valour and good-

ness of heart-towards God and all good people. He was only blameable for three things; the one for the earl Ethelwold; the other for the duke of Andover; and the last for the Nun, which he took from her abbey for her beauty." Which short account refers to, and confirms, the three particulars above related.---The MS. from whence this is extracted is to be found in the Cotton library, marked Galba, E. 3.

EDWARD,

E D W A R D, *surnamed The M A R T Y R.**The thirteenth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

NOTWITHSTANDING Eadgar, upon his death bed, had A. D. 975. appointed his son Edward to succeed him in the kingdom, his eyes were no sooner closed than the advancement of Edward was opposed by a powerful party, at the head of which was Elfrida, the second wife of Eadgar, who was ambitious of raising her own son Æthelred to the throne. Amongst the nobles who sided with her, the most potent was Alferus, earl of Mercia, whose interest was such, that the claim of Edward would certainly have been rejected had it not been for the artifice of Dunstan his fast friend, who, taking the advantage of a meeting which was convened to argue the claim of the two princes, came into the assembly arrayed in his official habit, and suddenly proclaimed Edward king. This proceeding surprised the council in general; but as the greater part of them were composed of the clergy, the point was carried to the great disappointment of the opposing parties\*.

The dispute being settled in this manner by Dunstan, Edward was permitted to ascend the throne; and, although he was then but twelve years of age, he was crowned by Dunstan at Kingstone in the year 975†.

During the short reign of this unfortunate prince, his dominions were not disturbed by any war; but the peace which had continued all his father's life time still existed; therefore few or no particulars relative to the civil or military history of this period can be collected with any degree of certainty. The early part of Edward's reign was spent in sharp debates between the monks and secular priests, which will necessarily form a portion of the succeeding part of this work‡.

\* Malmsh. &amp;c.

† Ibid.

‡ Vide the Ecclesiastical History, part 2. of this volume.

A. D. 978. Elfrida, and her party, who had been disappointed in their hopes of advancing Æthelred to the throne by the sudden proceeding of Dunstan, though they smothered the appearance of resentment, were still no well-wishers to Edward, especially the queen herself, who relying upon the interest of her friends, was plotting his removal, and at last effected her bloody purpose in the following treacherous manner.—The king, being one day hunting in a forest near Corfe Castle\*, the habitation of his step-mother Elfrida, and desirous of paying his respects to her, left his company following the chase, and rode, without attendants, up to the gate of the castle. His arrival being signified to Elfrida, she came forth to meet him, and, with many flattering compliments, entreated him to alight from his horse, and enter her dwelling; but he, desirous of rejoining his company, politely refused her request; at the same time, asking for a cup of wine to allay his thirst, his request was instantly granted; but whilst he was drinking, one of the servants of Elfrida, whom she had corrupted, stabbed him in the back. The unhappy youth, feeling himself wounded, spurred his horse in order to escape from his murderer, and rejoin his companions; but he had not rode far before the loss of blood, which flowed plentifully from his wound, rendered him so weak that he fell from his horse; but one of his feet still hanging by the stirrup, he was dragged up and down the forest for a considerable time, and at last left dead in the way, whither his body was traced by the tract of blood which flowed from him. His corpse was at first buried, without any funeral pomp, at Warham; but, about three years after, it was removed from thence by Ulferus, earl of Mercia, and, with all due solemnities, re-buried at Shaftesbury. Edward was murdered in the year 978, being then only fifteen years of age, after he had reigned three years; and from his receiving so unworthy a death, he afterwards obtained the title of Martyr. The murderers afterwards, repenting the foulness of her crime, spent the residue of her days in sorrow and penance†.

The outlines of the character of Edward.

Edward was of a modest disposition, and endowed with such a sweetness of temper, that he was justly admired, even by his enemies. His piety, and other virtues, also, were so conspicuous, that people, in general, had formed great expectations from his government when he should have arrived at fit age to take it wholly upon himself. Such are the mere outlines of the character of this prince, whose death was generally lamented. He had no wife, nor issue to succeed him.

\* Called Corvesgate in the ancient authors, and situated, says Camden, in the isle of Purbeck.

† W. Malmsh. de Gest. Reg. Ang. lib. 2. cap. 9. & alib.

ÆTHELRED, *surnamed The UNREADY.**The Fourteenth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

AFTER the murder of young Edward, Æthelred, the son of A. D. 979. Eadgar by Elfrida, was advanced to the throne, although sorely against the will of many; for as he came to his dignity through the blood of his brother (notwithstanding he was perfectly innocent of the crime \*) he could never secure the good-will of his subjects in general, from whence arose many civil discords within the kingdom, as well amongst the nobles, as amongst the people of the common rank †.

Dunstan, it is said, not only at first refused to invest this prince with the regal dignities, but was desirous of advancing Edgith, the illegitimate daughter of Eadgar (born to him by the nun Wolfhild) to the throne; but she having already seen the miserable end of her brother Edward, would, by no means, consent to the entreaties of the archbishop, preferring her present humble situation, in a monastery, to the glories of a crown with such appearances of danger ‡.

Archbishop Dunstan being disappointed in his design of placing Edgith upon the throne, at last consented to the advancement of Æthelred, and crowned him, with his own hands, at Kingston on Easter-day, being the 24th day of April, in the year 979, he being then just turned of twelve years of age. This unprosperous beginning of Æthelred's reign was rendered more conspicuous by several unusual appearances in the heavens, which, by the discontented clergy, were interpreted as dreadful omens of ensuing troubles; and such interpretations were as confidently believed by the credulous multitude §.

\* Infomuch that it is said, that upon the report of his brother Edward's death, he wept so heartily that his mother was exasperated to such a degree, that she beat him severely with a wax taper, so that he hated the sight of a wax taper ever after. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 10.

† Malmshury, &c.

‡ Vita S. Editha.

§ Dunstan, indeed, is said to have open-

ly prophesied of the evils that were to ensue. It is also further advanced, that when he was baptized, his water ran from him into the font, and polluted it. Whereupon Dunstan exclaimed with an oath, that he would prove a sluggard if he lived. All these pretended omens and superstitious interpretations heightened the discontent of the people. Vid. Malmsh. &c.

A. D. 981. The dislike which the people in general bore towards their young king was the subject of various disputes and frequent discords, by which means the power of the nation was divided into separate parties, and continually weakened. These unhappy dissensions were soon noticed by those enemies of the state, the Danes, who considered the present as a favourable opportunity to accomplish their designs. They therefore fitted out seven large vessels, and a strong party of them sailed round the coasts of Kent, where they plundered the country bordering upon the sea, but more especially the island of Thanet, which they entirely pillaged; from thence they went to Southampton, which city they destroyed, and either killed or took prisoners all the inhabitants. At the same time, a strong party of Norway pirates plundered the country bordering about West Chester\*.

The Danes renewed their attack.

A. D. 982. The Danes finding that their attacks, instead of animating the people of England against them, and causing them to unite their forces together, served only to increase the discord which prevailed in the nation. This made them more bold and daring in their undertakings; so that the same army which had destroyed Southampton, coasted round the southern parts of the kingdom, and pillaged the sea coasts of Devonshire and Cornwall. About the same time another party of the Danes, with three large ships, sailed to Dorsetshire, and harassed the country round about Portland. To these misfortunes, also another severe one was added, for, in the same year, the whole city of London was burnt to the ground; but whether this was the effects of a calamitous accident, or occasioned by the hand of the enemy, is not recorded. However, from the manner in which it is related by historians, it appears rather to have been owing to the former cause†.

The Danes commit fresh outrages.

A. D. 986. One great cause of the disrespect under which Æthelred laboured, was the great interest that the monkish clergy had with the people, and who because they stood not so high in Æthelred's favour as the secular priests, were continually irritating the people against him; and unhappily, in the sixth year of his reign, he was involved in a grievous quarrel with the bishop of Rochester. Æthelred, in order to revenge himself upon the prelate, besieged the city of Rochester. This matter coming to the ears of Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, and he being offended at the steps which the king had taken, sent messengers, beseeching him to desist, at the same time telling him, that he would highly incense St. Andrew, who was patron of that city, if he damaged the lands that were dedicated to his use, or otherwise hurt his votaries. This craft (which was not uncommon in those days among the priests

Quarrel between the king and the bishop of Rochester.

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid. &c.

for.

for the preservation of their lands to entail them on certain saints) had not the desired effect; for the king still continued the siege, wherefore Dunstan proposed the payment of an hundred pounds to the king. This proposal was by him accepted, and accordingly the money being paid down, he raised the siege, and departed with his forces. When Dunstan heard that the king would not be pacified without the payment of the money, he reprehended his avarice, and denounced many evils which he said were by God ordained to happen to him \*. This accident, and Dunstan's exclamation, increased the dislike which Æthelred's subjects had conceived against him.

The year following strange fluxes carried off a great number of A. D. 987. people, and the cattle suffered prodigiously by a grievous murrain which afflicted them.—The same year, or early in the beginning of the next, a large party of the Danes landed upon the coasts of Devonshire, where they began as usual, to pillage the country. But Goda, who was the governor of that district, being joined by a chieftain named Sternwold, marched with a strong army against them, and after a bloody battle, the Danes were put to flight. This victory, however, was dearly bought by the Saxons, who lost both Goda and Sternwold their leaders, in the encounter †.

From this time to the year 991, the Danes still continued committing various piracies, sometimes in one part of the kingdom, and sometimes in another; and being emboldened by the success they met with, they then landed in the east, under the command of Justin, and Guthmund the son of Steytan, two valiant leaders, and destroyed the town of Ipswich, continuing their course, uninterrupted, and plundering the country till they came near Malden in Essex, where they were met by Brithnoth, earl of the East Angles, with whom they fought; and after an obstinate and bloody battle, the Saxons were totally overcome with the loss of their leader, who was left dead upon the field, and the far greater part of their army. This victory, as it added to the consequence of the conquerors, so it intimidated the people who inhabited those parts, inasmuch that the Danes went whither they would, plundering and pillaging the country, and none were bold enough to make any resistance. Æthelred, in the mean time, was not able to make head against them; for the state was divided into various parties, which obstinately refused to unite with each other. In this distraction of affairs, a council of state was summoned, in order to consult upon the most proper methods that were to be pursued in this emergency. Here some few offered assistance to the king, but the greater part (amongst which were Siric, archbishop of Canterbury, together with

The success of the Danes.

Peace bought of the Danes.

\* Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 10.

† Simon Dunelm, &c.

Æthel-



Ethelward and Alfric, two chief noblemen \*) proposed the purchasing a peace by money. The matter being agreed upon, ten thousand pounds was paid to the Danes, who thereupon promised to withdraw their forces †.

A. D. 993. The great success which the Danes had met with in England the preceding year, and more particularly the money which had been paid to them, was an irresistible temptation to them, or others of their countrymen, to make fresh efforts to enrich themselves with the spoils of a declining kingdom.—Therefore, the second year following, with a large fleet, they sailed into England. The rumour of their coming was quickly spread amongst the people to their universal terror and dismay. In the mean time Æthelred, with the greatest difficulty, collected a fleet in order to oppose them. The command of this fleet was committed to Alfric, the son of Elfer, duke of Mercia—a man, who was but just returned from banishment, whither he had been sent by the king for some great offence, which being now forgiven, he was restored to favour, and invested with the command. The fleet which Æthelred had fitted out, it is thought, would have been more than sufficient to have opposed that of the Danes had the command been given to a faithful man; but Alfric having nothing less at heart than the interest of his country, treacherously gave the enemy notice of his approach, so that they readily escaped the danger. Soon after falling in unavoidably with part of the enemy's fleet, he was reduced to the necessity of engaging with them, which he pretended to do, whilst in reality he was only giving them leisure to escape; and not content with this manifestation of his treachery, he fully confirmed it at last by an actual revolt from the king's fleet, and joining that of the Danes. This behaviour so exasperated the other Saxon chieftains, that they pursued the fleet of the Danes, and at last retook the ship in which Alfric had made his escape, with all his soldiers, and his armour, but he suspecting their design, had been careful to secure himself on board some other vessel. However, when they found not the prize they sought for on board the ship, they wreaked their vengeance on those that were there, and put every one of them to the sword. The Saxon chieftains, who distinguished themselves upon this occasion, were named Theored, Elstan and Ešwin; but notwithstanding all their efforts, the king's fleet sustained some considerable loss—and the fleet of the Danes secured their retreat for the present with but

\* The Saxon annals say, that Ælfeges, bishop of Winchester, was also one of the chief who gave this council.

† Simon Dunelm. The Saxon annals place this transaction under the year 993,

and declare, that the fleet of the Danes consisted of 390 ships, under the command of Unlaf, a great chieftain; whilst others make Unlaf to be the conductor of those who came the succeeding year.

little damage\*; but soon after, being met by the Londoners, they were defeated with prodigious loss.

In the mean time another party of the Danes pillaged the city of *Bedbanburgh*, near *Durham*; and sailing from thence, entered the mouth of the *Humber*, wafting the country on both sides, in *Lindsey* and *Yorkshire*. To oppose these, *Æthelred* sent his army under the conduct of three captains, named *Frema*, *Godwine*, and *Fredegift*. These men, it seems, were of Danish pedigree, and the fast friends of those they were sent to oppose: the battle therefore was not long begun, before they all left their own army to shift for themselves, and joined the forces of the Danes; by which treachery the Saxon forces were entirely overthrown, and the Danes, without much loss, obtained the victory.—These proceedings justly alarmed the inhabitants who dwelt in those parts, so that they joined their forces together, and fell upon the Danes so suddenly that they were obliged to make a hasty retreat, with considerable loss.

These misfortunes, occasioned by the treachery of the chief commanders of the Saxons, and the rapid progress that the Danes made towards a conquest of the land, were so far from rousing the martial spirit of the people in general, that they seemed only to have exasperated them the more against the king, who was at this time in a very perplexing situation, not knowing how to proceed, nor whom to trust: however, he endeavoured to revenge himself upon *Ælfric* for his treason, by causing the eyes of his son to be put out †.

These calamities were soon succeeded by others; for, either the latter end of the same year, or early in the beginning of the next, *Unlaf*, king of *Norway*, and *Sweyne* king of *Denmark*, with ninety-four large galleys, came up the *Thames* as far as *London*, which city they closely besieged; but the Londoners so bravely resisted their attacks, that, after many fruitless attempts, in which they sustained great loss, they were obliged to retreat; which they did, exasperated to the highest degree by their repulse; and, in revenge, they wasted the coasts of *Essex*, *Kent*, and *Suffex*, with fire and sword, destroying every place they came to, and slaughtering every miserable inhabitant that fell into their hands, without paying any regard to their age or sex. With this wanton cruelty they held their course uninterrupted, until they reached *Southampton*, where they abode the winter.—In the mean time, *Æthelred*, utterly unable to make head against them, referred the matter to council, and it was agreed upon, that peace should again be purchased with money; therefore a treaty was opened with the Danes, who insisted upon the payment of sixteen thousand pounds; which exorbitant demand was agreed to by the Saxons ‡.

\* *Huntindon, & S. Dunelm.*

† *S. Dunelm, Bromton, &c.*

‡ *Ibid.*

After.

Unlaf, king of  
Norway, is bap-  
tized.

After the treaty of peace was concluded upon between the Saxons and the Danes, Æthelred sent an invitation to Unlaf to come and visit him at Andover, where he then lay; which invitation was accepted by Unlaf, who, on his arrival, was well received by Æthelred, and entertained in a princely manner. At the same time Unlaf, of his own accord, embraced the Christian faith, and was there baptized, Æthelred being his sponsor at the font. Nor was Unlaf dismissed from the Saxon court until he had received several valuable presents; whilst he, in return for the friendly reception he had met with, took a solemn oath never to molest the kingdom again; which oath he faithfully kept, without the least infringement\*.

A. D. 997. The stipulated sum being paid to the Danes whilst they abode at Southampton, the following spring they departed, and the kingdom was left in peace for the space of three years; at the end of which the Danish fleet, that had made its escape through the treachery of Alfric, being joined by other parties of the Danes who resided in England, sailed about Cornwall, and entered the mouth of the river Severn, pillaging the country on both sides of its banks; from whence marching farther into the country, they consumed Lydford, and burnt the abbey of Saint Ordulfe at Essinstock, carrying vast spoils to their ships. In their return, they ravaged Dorsetshire with fire and sword, without meeting with any resistance; for the people in general were so much disheartened by their calamities, and so reduced, that they were not able to make head against the conquerors.—The Danes, thus successful in their expedition, spent the winter in the Isle of Wight, from whence they made frequent incursions into Hampshire and Sussex†.

A. D. 998. In the mean time, the Saxons, who inhabited those parts, had frequently raised armies to encounter with their foes; but as often as they were brought to action, either from the irresolution of the parties, the treachery of the leaders, or some other misfortune, they were constantly overcome: and these imprudent proceedings (the effects of dreadful intestine divisions) secured the conquest to their enemies, and was the great source of all their calamities‡.

A. D. 999. In the spring of the year 999, the Danes quitted the Isle of Wight, and entering the mouth of the Thames, sailed up the Medway to Rochester, which city they besieged; but the Kentish-men assembled together, and took the field against them. A sharp engagement ensued between the two parties, in which, however, the Danes at last were conquerors, though their victory was obtained with considerable loss. After the Danes had overcome the Kentish-men, they pillaged

The Danes  
leave England.

\* S. Dunelm, &c.

† Ibid. &c.

‡ Ibid.

the eastern parts of the country, and with great spoils returned to their ships.—Æthelred in the mean time, with much difficulty, had raised an army to oppose them; but, either through the discontent amongst the soldiers, or the treachery of their leaders, nothing effectual was done to hinder the progress of the Danes.—After the Danes had pillaged Kent (for what reason is unknown) they hoisted their sails, and crossed the sea to Normandy, where they abode during the winter\*.

Æthelred determined to take the advantage of the absence of those Danes who were gone to Normandy, to attack those who were left at home; he therefore undertook an expedition, both by sea and land, into Cumberland, where the Danes chiefly inhabited; who, being unable to resist the army of Æthelred, he, by way of retaliation, wasted the country with fire and sword, slaughtering all that he met with, and driving away the rest: those Danes also shared the same fate, who were planted in the Isles of Anglesey and places adjacent.—The success of this expedition somewhat raised the expectations of the people, and led them to think a little more favourable of their king; but the succeeding misfortunes soon obliterated the remembrance of this exploit †. —The same year Elfgifa, the wife of Æthelred, died ‡.

The following year the Danes, who had been in Normandy for the space of a twelvemonth, returned again to England, and entering the mouth of the river Ex with their fleet, laid close siege to the city of Exeter; but the citizens so valiantly defended themselves, that they could not take the city. Enraged at their repulse, they revenged themselves upon the surrounding country, which they pillaged and destroyed without the least mercy or remorse.—The people of Somerset and Devon, hearing of the depredations which their enemies were committing, assembled themselves at a place called Penho, where they fought with the Danes, but were overthrown with great slaughter.

From this time the Danes got ground daily in the kingdom; for all the attempts of the English to extricate themselves from these evils proved ineffectual. For want of proper counsellors, the affairs of the state were badly conducted, and the want of unity frustrated all their expeditions. The chief nobles were many of them secretly the friends of the Danes, and as often as they were put in employment revolted to the enemies: and, notwithstanding the great expences that were daily falling upon the nation, the clergy in general refused to bear any share in them, pleading their privileges; so that the whole devolved upon the commoner people, who were most cruelly harassed, and stripped of every thing they had, whilst nothing beneficial was effected

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid.

‡ John Bromton.

by all the treasure extorted from them. Thus the nation was reduced to the lowest ebb.—As for Æthelred, he was from his own nature irresolute and inactive, but rendered still more so by the discords of his nobles, and dislike that his subjects bore to him; however, in order to strengthen his house by some powerful affinity, he fought in marriage Emma, the daughter of Richard duke of Normandy, and his suit being approved of by her father, she was accordingly sent over into England the following year, A. D. 1002, and was married to him immediately upon her arrival\*.—But whilst all this was transacting at the Saxon court, the Danes, who had been victorious at Penho, and had plundered the greatest part of Devonshire, returned to the Isle of Wight with the spoils they had gained, and from thence began afresh their attacks upon Hampshire and places adjoining. The Hampshiremen, however, used their utmost endeavours to prevent the incursions of the Danes; but, being put to flight in an unfortunate encounter, with the loss of Æthelward their general, the whole country was left open to the mercy of the conquerors, who plundered and destroyed every place they came to, exercising all kinds of wanton cruelty†.

A. D. 1002. Not long after his second marriage, Æthelred, presuming on the consequence his alliance with the duke of Normandy had given him, determined upon a step which ended in the final ruin of the nation: this was a massacre of all the Danes who inhabited within his dominions. For this purpose, therefore, he sent letters privately to every town and city, that all might be ready, at one appointed day and hour, to execute the bloody command. The day fixed for this purpose was the thirteenth of November‡, being the festival of Saint Brice, when it was put into execution with the most rigid severity by the Saxons, who, in the madness of their rage, made no distinction between the guilty and the innocent; for, amongst the rest, were slain, Gunhild, a sister to Sweyne, king of Denmark, with her husband Pallingus, a nobleman of great repute, who were both Christians, and had been delivered by Sweyne as hostages of peace, when he agreed with the Saxons, at Southampton, to forbear hostilities, on condition of the money then received; and what made the murder of these two innocent persons the more heinous, is, that they were constant advocates for the Saxons, and used all their endeavours to befriend them§.

A. D. 1003. The news of this massacre, and particularly of his sister's death, being reported to Sweyne, he was so exasperated against the Saxons, that, breathing vengeance, he collected a powerful army, and hastened to England. His first attack was upon the city of Exeter, which,

Sweyne, king of Denmark, invades England.

\* S. Dunelm, W. Malmsh. &c.  
† Chron. Sax.

‡ Milton makes it the 9th of July.  
§ W. Malmsh. S. Dunelm, &c.

either

either through the treachery or negligence of the governor of Devonshire, was taken, and the wall levelled to the ground, from the east to the western gate. The governor was a Norman, named Hugh, who was advanced to that post by the favour of queen Emma.—The Danes, after having pillaged the city, and conveyed the spoils to their ships, proceeded to Wiltshire, wasting the country as they marched along.—These proceedings of the Danes caused the inhabitants of Wiltshire and Hampshire to assemble together in order to oppose them. After they had raised a powerful army, Ælfric, who had so lately manifested his treason, and who was again recalled from exile, was appointed general, and, with great shew of zeal, marched towards the enemy; but when they were come in sight of them, and should have been preparing for the battle, he suddenly feigned himself sick, and left the army, destitute of a general, to their own discretion. The soldiers, being thus disappointed, and having none amongst them that would readily undertake the charge of the command, in the heat of their discontent disbanded themselves, and left the enemy to pursue their course, who took the towns of Wilton and Salisbury, and wasted the country round about; but hearing at last that Æthelred was himself preparing to take the field against them, they returned to their ships, enriched with prodigious spoils.

The next year Sweyne, having augmented his fleet, sailed to Eng-A.D. 1004. land, and landed upon the coast of Norfolk, where he destroyed the country, burnt the city of Norwich, and slaughtered the citizens.—The East Angles attacked by Sweyne. These proceedings of Sweyne soon reached the ears of Ulfkettel, earl of the East Angles, a man of great valour; but he not having time enough to collect a sufficient body of forces, for the present, to oppose the enemy, after some consultation, made peace with Sweyne, and his army, who promised not to molest them any more:—but about three weeks after the conclusion of the truce, Sweyne, with his forces, silently left their ships, and went to the city of Thetford, where they abode that night, and in the morning burned it to the ground. In the mean time, Ulfkettel, who had carefully watched the motions of the Danes, marched against them with his army, which he had greatly increased, and fell upon them so suddenly, that, had the orders of Ulfkettel been properly obeyed, they would in this encounter have obtained a complete victory; for, before he joined battle with Sweyne, he gave command that a strong party should, during the conflict, march down to the water-side, and set fire to the Danish ships, in order to cut off their retreat; but, either through fear or neglect, this command was left unperformed, so that, after an obstinate resistance, the Danes being overcome, fled to their ships, and putting off from shore, eluded the pursuit of the Saxons. The losses that were sustained on either side, during this engagement, were very great, but more particularly

particularly by the Danes, who had not met with such resistance for a considerable time; and their forces were so much reduced, that they made no further attack upon the English during that year\*.

A. D. 1005. The year following, a grievous famine added to the calamities which distressed the hapless Saxons, and which proved so severe, that even the Danes, who took every advantage of plundering the land, were so much affected by it, that they were at last obliged to hoist their sails, and return to their own native homes to supply themselves with food.—During all these heavy misfortunes which fell upon the English people, they still continued to foment their own private disorders; so that, what by the frequent attacks of the Danes, the dreadful effects of the famine, and the extortions made by the chief nobles, the whole land was brought to such grievous distress as had not before been experienced by the Saxon inhabitants †.

A. D. 1006. The next year, the Danes, having increased their navy, and considerably augmented the number of their soldiers, returned into England, and spread themselves over the coasts of Kent and Sussex, where they took great spoils, which they conveyed to their ships. In the mean time, Æthelred levied an army out of Mercia, with which he marched against the Danes; but they, not thinking it prudent to hazard an engagement with him, retreated before him, and secured themselves on board their ships, with which they coasted about from place to place, to avoid the Saxon army, and plundered the country wherever they came, being careful to convey their spoils to their ships, and flying thither themselves, when they apprehended the king, with his forces, was approaching near them. Thus they harassed the land by their frequent invasions, and obtained great spoils, without much danger to themselves. In this manner they vexed the Saxons all the Autumn, so that the harvest was neglected in many places, and in others trodden down by the marches of the army, which added to the distress of the people.—Æthelred's army, wearied with the vain pursuit that they had made of the Danes from place to place, returned home in the Winter, disheartened by their unsuccessful expedition; whilst, on the other hand, the Danes carried their spoils to the Isle of Wight, where they abode until Christmas, at which time, finding that the Saxon army was disbanded, they marched boldly through Hampshire into Berkshire, as far as Reading and Wallingford, and from thence to Ashdune, and other places which fell in with their rout: from whence returning home another way, they found many people in arms near the river Kennet, prepared to oppose them; but they being put to flight after a short engagement, the Danes returned safe to their ships, bear-

Æthelred  
marches against  
the Danes, and  
his success.

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid.

ing with them prodigious spoils. All the countries through which they passed suffered dreadfully by this march; for the Danes wantonly burnt, or otherwise destroyed, whatever they could not carry away\*. Mean while Æthelred was in Shropshire, where it was thought he caused, by the council and assistance of Edric Straton, a nobleman named Alfhelm, to be treacherously put to death, and afterwards seized upon his two sons, and caused their eyes to be put out †; but the reason of this cruel proceeding of Æthelred is not recorded so as to give any degree of satisfaction to the reader.

Æthelred, the next year, made Edric Straton duke of Mercia, and A. D. 1007. gave him his daughter Edgitha in marriage. Edric was a man of obscure birth; but from his eloquent speech, and pleasing deportment, had amassed together vast treasures, with which, as some have reported, he purchased his advancement ‡.

The same year Æthelred summoned a council together, in order to consult upon the measures to be taken against the Danes; for the unsuccessfulness of the last year's expedition had so much disheartened both the king and the people, that they did not seem inclined to take the field again; therefore, by the council of Edric, the new made nobleman, and others ill affected to their native country's interest, it was agreed upon, that peace should again be purchased of the Danes, whose demands, before exorbitant, were now stretched to thirty thousand pounds, which vast sum, to the almost total ruin of the kingdom, was exacted of the people, and paid to the greedy demanders. The heavy impositions that the nation was burthened with to pay this sum, made the people justly outrageous, and more particularly they expressed their dislike of Edric, whom they considered as the chief contriver of the tax; nor did they hesitate to declare, that it evinced his partiality for the Danes, and want of love to his native land. But all these clamours were overborn by the smooth speeches of Edric, who, by his flattering artifices, prevailed so much with the king, that he not only refused to hearken to any accusations that were brought against him, but, on the contrary, raised him the higher in his esteem—being by him persuaded that all those complaints proceeded only from envy and malevolence. So much was the king infatuated, that he made him his ambassador to the Danes, when, it is reported, he treacherously revealed to them the weakness of the and, and proved chiefly instrumental in its total destruction §.

The advancement of Edric.

Peace purchased of the Danes.

\* S. Dunelm.  
† Horent.

‡ Ibid. & M. West.  
§ Malmibury, &c.



A. D. 1008. The next year *Æthelred* seemed determined to put his kingdom into a better posture of defence than it had hitherto been. For this purpose he ordered, that out of every three hundred and ten hides of land, a ship should be fitted out, and from every nine hides a corset and helmet for his soldiers. All this being performed, the fleet and armaments were brought together at Sandwich, and the people in general had great expectations from the operations of this combined force; but some fatal divisions ensuing amongst the nobles of *Æthelred's* court, prevented the effect for which they were designed; for *Bithric*, brother to the favourite *Edric*, accused one *Wulnoth*, a great officer presiding over the South Saxons, of treason. This charge, though it is said to have been false in itself, had, however, gained so much ground in the king's thoughts, that *Wulnoth* soon found that his stay in the kingdom would be dangerous: wherefore, having prepared twenty ships, he, and his friends, went aboard of them, and supported themselves by piracies upon the sea coasts. *Æthelred* was very much moved against *Wulnoth* when he heard of the step he had taken, and readily accepted of the proposal of his accuser *Bithric*, who declared that he knew where *Wulnoth* resided with his fleet, and, if the king would give him the command of a certain number of those ships which had lately been fitted out, he would engage to surprize, and take him. Accordingly, eighty ships were appointed for this expedition, which sailed from Sandwich under the conduct of *Bithric*; but a violent tempest overtaking them soon after they had put out to sea, they were reduced to the greatest distress, and driven on shore, where, being found by *Wulnoth*, he took the advantage of their calamity, set upon them with all his force, and burnt them all. *Æthelred*, disheartened by this dreadful misfortune, with a heavy heart left Sandwich, and retired to London, whither the remaining part of his navy also followed him. Thus was all this great preparation, which seemed to promise safety to the land, rendered of but little use\*.

A. D. 1009. The next year, a powerful army of the Danes, under the conduct of a valiant chief named *Turkill*, landed in the isle of *Thanet*, where they continued until the beginning of Autumn, when they were joined by a still greater party, lead by two chieftains named *Hemning* and *Ilaff*. These combined forces soon after left *Thanet*, and coasting to Sandwich, they there landed, and marched directly to *Canterbury*, which city they besieged with great fury; but the citizens, and the inhabitants of the eastern parts of *Kent*, fearing they should not be able to oppose them, opened a treaty of peace with the besiegers, who, in consideration of the payment of three thousand pounds, raised the siege, and departed from thence, proceeding to the isle of *Wight*, robbing and

\* S. Duncm.

destroying

destroying the country as they went along. Æthelred, in order, if possible, to check the progress of the Danes, issued fresh commands, and raised a powerful army to oppose them; and, being sensible that whilst the whole of them were kept together, the Danes would not wait their coming, or hazard the fortune of a pitched battle, but continue to harraßs the country in such places where the whole army could not follow them; he, therefore, stationed large parties of his forces in different places, that they might be ready, at all times, to protect the coasts; but, whether from the disobedience of orders, or from being improperly stationed, cannot easily be determined; yet certain it is, that the Danes were not thereby prevented from making their usual excursions\*.

The same year, whilst the Danes were advanced into the land a considerable distance from their ships, Æthelred, with the main body of his army, being not far from thence, and watching their motions, marched to an advantageous place, where he intended to surround them in their turn, which it is thought he might easily have done, and by such a signal defeat have secured the peace of his kingdom for a time at least. Amidst these preparations, and while all his men seemed desirous of revenging the injuries their country had sustained from the cruelties of their enemies, Edric Straton, with much policy and subtle discourse, persuaded Æthelred to drop the design which he had formed; so that he withdrew his forces, and permitted the Danes to pass to their ships without any molestation, who were not a little rejoiced at such a lucky and unexpected escape. After this, the Danes coasted about Kent, and, during the Winter, cruised on the borders of the Thames, frequently invading Kent and Essex, and forcing large contributions from the inhabitants; they also made several attempts on the city of London, which proved ineffectual; for the Londoners, whenever they were attacked, made a very gallant resistance, and repulsed their enemies with great loss†.

The following Spring the Danes left their ships, and marching over the land through Chiltern wood into Oxfordshire, came to the city of Oxford, which they besieged and took; and after they had pillaged and murdered the inhabitants, they burnt the city to the ground. From thence they returned home, and divided their army into two parties, which marching along the banks of the Thames, pillaged and destroyed the country on either side, until hearing that the Londoners were coming against them with a powerful army, those on the north side of the river crossed over it at Staines, and joined their fellows, and thence passing through Surry, returned to their ships laden with spoils‡.

\* S. Duncelm.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

After .

The Danes escape through the treachery of Edric.

D. A. 1010. The Danes march into Oxfordshire.

The Danes  
overcome the  
East Anglians  
in battle.

After having employed some time in repairing their ships, about Easter they sailed round to the east, and landed in the province of the East Angles, and, marching by Ipswich, went on till they came to a place called Ringmere, where they were met by Ulfkettel, the valiant governor of that country, by whom they had some time before been put to flight. Both parties joined battle, and a sharp encounter ensued, which ended in the defeat of the Saxons, though the conflict was long supported by the valour of the inhabitants of Cambridgeshire\*. In this battle Æthelstan, the son-in-law of Æthelred, and many others of the Saxon nobility, were slain. The Danes having obtained this victory over the East Anglian forces, marched about the country for three months without meeting with any further resistance, pillaging also the borders of Lincolnshire and Huntingdonshire, and burning in their march the towns of Thetford and Grantbridge; the abbeys and churches wherever they came they destroyed, and cruelly butchered all the inhabitants of that country as were so unfortunate as to fall in their way; and in this manner they continued their march through Essex until they reached their ships †.

The progress of  
the Danes.

They did not long remain quiet in their ships; for they no sooner deposited the riches they had acquired by plunder, than, being desirous of adding to what they had already got, they began a second expedition into Oxfordshire, which they passed through, and took in their march the counties of Bedford, Buckingham and Hertfordshire, where, as they had before done in the East Angles, they pillaged, and depopulated the country wherever they came, paying no regard to places, however sacred, nor to the sex or quality of such miserable people as fell into their hands. In this march, having taken great spoils, they returned to their ships.

Other expedi-  
tions of the  
Danes.

Not long after, these inhuman plunderers (not content with the ruin and devastation they had occasioned, and the innocent blood they had spilt) undertook another excursion, and passing through Northamptonshire, burnt and plundered the town of Northampton, and destroyed the country round about; from thence they continued their course into Wiltshire, and so back again to their ships in triumph. All this time, the miserable Saxons, ruined and distressed by the frequent and cruel excursions of their enemies, had neither power nor courage to make head against them, so that those merciless conquerors set no bounds to their rapacious designs and wanton cruelties, which they carried to such a pitch as is truly shocking to relate ‡.

\* Holingshead says, "the Suffolk and Norfolk men gave way first; but the Cambridgeshire men stood firm, winning eternal fame, but at the expence of the lives of their chief nobility: at length one Turkettell Warencheved, of Danish parents, first began to fly," &c.  
† S. Dunelm.  
‡ Ibid.

The next spring they fallied again from their ships with the same A. D. 1011. ferocity as they had manifested the preceding year, ruining the country on either shore of the Thames: on one side, as far as Huntingdon, and on the other, as far as Wiltshire and Southampton.—In the mean time, Æthelred, unable to oppose them, by the advice of his council, proposed again to purchase peace, by the payment of certain sums of money. To these proposals they lightly listened, but in the mean time forbore not to exercise their wonted cruelties; for, being now returned towards their ships, about the month of September\* they laid siege to Canterbury, and some time after took it, by the treachery (as is reported) of Almere, the archdeacon. They had no sooner taken possession of the city, than they began to manifest the barbarity of their disposition, by the wanton cruelties they exercised on the miserable inhabitants; throwing some of them over the walls, pushing others into the fire; murdering the little infants, torn from their mothers breasts, by tossing them upon their spears, or by throwing them under the wheels of loaded carriages; whilst the women themselves were dragged up and down the city by the hair of their heads, and made, by force, subservient to the beastly lusts of their tormentors. Amongst the rest of those whom the Danes took in the sacking of the city, was Alphegus, the archbishop of Canterbury, a man utterly detested by them, because he was contrary to their party, and, by his prudent councils, endeavoured to reconcile his own countrymen to their proper interest: in short, he was a man of exemplary piety, and much beloved in the city. Him they seized upon, and (wounded as he was, by some means, in the dreadful conflict) hurried on board a noisome ship, where they kept him long time close imprisoned. After this, they set fire to the city, and, of all the inhabitants, one out of ten alone was spared.—Seven months after the destruction of Canterbury, the archbishop had his ransom proposed to him, which was the enormous sum of three thousand pounds; and, because he refused to burthen those under him to raise the money, he was, after many insults, cruelly stoned to death. His body was afterwards conveyed to London, where it was buried, but from thence, in after-times, to Canterbury †.

Canterbury destroyed by the Danes.

The year following, before Easter, Æthelred assembled the nobles A. D. 1012. of the realm in council, at London, when it was agreed upon once more to purchase peace with the Danes; accordingly, forty-eight thousand pounds (which was by them demanded) was paid, and they again took oath to depart, and no more molest the kingdom. This

Money again paid to the Danes.

\* Vita S. Alphegi, apud Leland. Collect. vol. 1. fol. 19.—et vide Milton, Hist. of England, fol. 296.

† Vita S. Alphegi, Simon Dunelm, &c.

oath taken, and the money received by them, they dispersed their fleet, and returned home contented for a time, except Turkill their chief, who, with forty-five of their ships, abode at London, where he offered willingly his service to the king, and took an oath of allegiance, to defend the land from the future incursions of the foreign foe, on condition only of being received into pay, and his men clothed and fed at the expence of the Saxons. These conditions were accepted of by Æthelred; but the future events plainly proved the deceitfulness of Turkill, whose reasons for staying behind seem only to have been with a view of examining the nation's strength, and, as some have alledged, to give information accordingly to his countrymen, that they might renew their attacks upon the land in a time that should prove the most advantageous\*.

A.D. 1013. The year following, and, as some report, about the month of July, Sweyne, king of Denmark, came over into England with a powerful fleet, and landed at Sandwich, where, after he had abode some few days, he put off to sea, and coasted about the kingdom of the East Angles, and from thence proceeded to the mouth of the Humber, and entering the Trent with his fleet, landed his soldiers at Gainsborough, where he encamped.—His arrival caused such fear amongst the Northumbrians, that the whole province, with Uthred their earl, submitted to him without making the least resistance, or hazarding one battle. The example of the Northumbrians was quickly followed by the inhabitants of Lindsey, and those of Tisburg, and shortly after by all those who possessed the country on the north of Watling-Street.—From these he exacted pledges of their obedience, and also commanded them to furnish his army with horses and provision; which being done, he left the government of the provinces which had submitted to him, to his son Cnut, and, with his army, marched southward into Mercia, depopulating the places wherever they came, and burning and destroying the towns and cities that stood in their way, wherever they met with the least resistance; so that, at last, either through force or fear, the people in general submitted to him.—In the course of this rout, he took the cities of Oxford and Winchester, and from thence continued on till he came to London; but in his passage, crossing the Thames at an improper place, where there was no ford, he lost many of his men. Upon his arrival at London, he invested that city, and closely besieged it. King Æthelred himself was at the same time within the city, with Turkill the Dane, who was under his pay.—Sweyne, shortly after his arrival, fiercely assaulted the city; but the citizens, encouraged perhaps by the presence of their king, resisted with such bravery, that the Danes were beaten off. At the same time

*The arrival of  
Sweyne, king  
of Denmark, &  
his success.*

\* S. Dunelm.

strong parties took the advantage of falling out upon them, and slew a prodigious number, so that the whole of the Danish army was thrown into great confusion, and at last obliged to quit the field with great loss, Sweyne himself hardly escaping from the fury of the conquerors\*.

After this unfortunate attempt upon London, Sweyne marched with his army, with the utmost precipitation, to Wallingford, and from thence to Bath, where he abode some little time, and refreshed his troops. During his stay at Bath, Ethelme, earl of Devonshire, with many other great western officers, submitted themselves to him; and Sweyne, finding his affairs went on so prosperously, returned to his ships†.—In the mean time, the Londoners, fearing that he would revisit them with an augmented army, and that they should then be made the victims of his cruel rage, concluded with themselves that it would be better for them to seek to pacify him; which they soon after did, by following the example of the greater part of the kingdom, and submitting themselves to him‡.

Æthelred, their unfortunate king, in the mean time retired to Greenwich, where he abode a short time with Turkill the Dane, who, with his fleet, had stationed himself there. But soon after, finding his affairs still declining, he sent his queen Emma, together with his two sons, and all his treasure, into Normandy, where they sought the protection of Richard duke of Normandy, her brother.—Mean while Æthelred still continued with Turkill, but soon after left Greenwich, and went to the Isle of Wight, where he spent the greater part of the Winter; but at last followed his wife into Normandy, where he was well received, and entertained in a most friendly manner, by his brother-in-law Richard §.

\* S. Dunelm.

† Some have added, that, after Sweyne's return to his ships, want of provision, and the losses he sustained in the defeat at London, caused him, after he had exacted a certain sum of money from the Saxons (and by the payment of this money, adds Hellinghead, Æthelred thought to free himself from his enemies, but his nobles thought otherwise, and advised him to prepare for war) to return into Denmark, in order to refresh and augment his army.—

He soon returned from Denmark again, and was met immediately by the Saxons, when a sharp conflict ensued, in which the Saxons bid fair for conquest; but, by the revolt of their leaders, the day was finally lost, and the Danes obtained a complete victory; and afterwards pursuing their conquests, gained the major part of the kingdom.—See Hellinghead and Speed's Chron. &c.

‡ S. Dunelm.

§ Malmsh. et S. Dunelm.

The success of Sweyne after his defeat.

Æthelred goes over into Normandy.

## S W E Y N E.

*The first Danish Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 1014. **A**FTER the flight of Æthelred, Sweyne met with little or no opposition, being almost universally acknowledged as king of England; but the authority he exercised was that of a most savage and inhuman tyrant, laying most cruel impositions upon the people himself, and suffering his army to wanton in the distresses of those who had submitted to him, and whom he ought to have protected. They were not content with extorting from the wretched Saxons all the fruits of their labour, but, to gratify their inordinate lusts, the wives and daughters of those defenceless people were seized upon at their pleasure, and abused even before the faces of the disconsolate husbands or distressed parents; whilst, in every place where those insulting conquerors came, by way of distinction and eminence, they were called Lord Danes, and treated with the greatest respect, even by those they were so horridly injuring. Monasteries and churches, and all other sacred places, were burnt or otherwise destroyed, unless the distressed people redeemed them at such vast prices as their conquerors thought proper to inflict.—Nor were these all the misfortunes that fell upon the Saxons, especially those in the south; for what was spared to them by the merciless exactions of their tyrannizing monarch, was seized upon by Turkil and his party, who stiled themselves their friends and protectors\*.

The death of Sweyne. Some time after Sweyne had assumed the dignity and title of a king, he returned to Gainsborough †, where he called a great parliament; and, whilst he was sitting in the midst of his council, he was suddenly seized with some strange disorder, which soon put a period to his life ‡.

\* S. Dunelm, &c.

† S. Dunelm, *Scala Chronica*, &c.—Others say the following accident happened at Thetford, in the kingdom of the East Angles.

‡ According to the legendary story of king Edmund—Sweyne demanded an enormous price to save the shrine of Edmund, at Edmund's Bury, from destruction; but, because the distressed inhabitants declared their inability to comply with his demands,

he threatened to destroy not only the shrine, but also to burn the bones of the martyr. For which cause, whilst he was sitting in his council, an appearance of Edmund in complete armour entered the room, and smote him with a spear, or sword, so that he died, crying out that he was smitten by king Edmund: but no man (himself excepted) saw the apparition, or whence the stroke came.—Vide *Mat. West. Hoveden*, &c.

The

The sudden death of Sweyne caused a great alteration in the affairs of the kingdom; for, although the Danish army immediately afterwards made Cnut, the son of Sweyne, their king, yet the English noblemen speedily withdrew their allegiance, and once more inclined their thoughts to the re-advancement of Æthelred, their own natural sovereign; wherefore they instantly sent messengers into Normandy, inviting him to return, at the same time promising to stand by him with all their power. Æthelred received this news with great joy, and accordingly sent his son Edward with ambassadors into England, promising his forgiveness to all who had hitherto manifested themselves his enemies, and at the same time declaring that he would use his utmost endeavours to protect the realm from the incursions of its enemies. Edward was received by the nobles with great demonstrations of joy and satisfaction, and the messengers returned to Æthelred, declaring their willingness to re-advance him to his throne.—After this, Æthelred made no delay, but instantly returned to England, where he was received with the greatest marks of satisfaction.

In the mean time Cnut was not idle, but used every endeavour to strengthen himself, and get his army in readiness to oppose the advancement of Æthelred. At this time he still resided at Gainsborough, where his father died, and where both his army was encamped and his fleet attended. He not only made every provision that he could to carry on the war, but with singular prudence endeavoured, by the strictest justice and bounty, to secure the hearts of those Saxons as had quietly submitted to him, and still continued to assist him, which were principally the inhabitants of Lindsey and parts adjoining\*.

\* S. Duvelm.



ÆTHELRED *again restored.*

Cnut leaves  
England.

ÆTHELRED was no sooner reinstated in his regal dignity, than he placed himself at the head of his army, and entering Lindsey, revenged himself severely upon the inhabitants for their revolt, by burning their country, and putting many of them to death. —Cnut, hearing of his approach, and not thinking himself strong enough to stand the decision of the field, retired with his army to his ships, leaving his confederates to the mercy of Æthelred—and hasted round, with all possible speed, with the fleet to Sandwich, where he seized upon the hostages which had been given to his father Sweyne, and having cruelly mangled them, by cutting off their ears, flitting their noses, and chopping off their hands, he set them on shore. He then hoisted sail, and returned to Denmark, hopeless for the present of subduing England\*.

Money paid to  
the Danes.

However, the land was not released from all its grievances by the flight of Cnut, for the Danish fleet at Greenwich now demanded their pay; and accordingly the Saxons, already much impoverished, were burthened with fresh impositions, in order to raise the sum of thirty thousand pounds, to satisfy the demands made by those pretended auxiliaries. And these miseries were still increased by an accidental calamity; for about the month of October, the sea rising much higher than usual, overflowed many towns upon the coasts, and drowned a prodigious number of people†.

A. D. 1015. The next year a grand council of the nobles was, by Æthelred, convened at Oxford, in order to consult upon the affairs of the kingdom. But here nothing of any consequence appears to have been done, for the nobles were, as usual, divided in their opinions, and parties on one side proposing what was rejected by the other; and, to crown the whole, the traitor Edric, during the sitting of the assembly, caused two Danish noblemen, named Sigefrith and Morkar, to be murdered: these were the sons of a nobleman named Earngrun, who possessed certain lands in Northumberland.—Edric, it seems, in order the better

Edric's treach-  
ery.

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid.

to colour this murder, brought a charge of treason against them \*, which being credited by Æthelred, he soon after seized upon their estates, and caused Elgitha, the wife of Sigeferth, to be kept at Malmsbury, where she was seen by Eadmund the third son of Æthelred, who being smitten with her charms, married her against the consent of her father, and then went into Northumberland, and took the lands which belonged to the murdered noblemen as his own right †.

Whilst these affairs were transacting at home, Cnut was busy at Denmark in preparing a strong fleet ready to renew the war with the English, being informed, as some report, of the dissensions of the people, and weakness of the kingdom, by Turkill the Dane, who resided here. Having, therefore, collected two hundred large ships, and furnished them with every requisite for the undertaking, and being joined by Lachman, king of Sweden, and Olave, king of Norway, he came over into England, and landed at Sandwich—where he abode till he had sent out spies to various parts of the land to discover what preparations had been made against him, who, on their return, informed him, that his expedition had not been so secretly conducted but that the English had notice of his arrival, and that Æthelred had accordingly prepared a large army in order to oppose him ‡.

Turkill, the Dane, who had hitherto stood neuter, upon the arrival of Cnut with such a powerful army, revolted from the English, and joined the Danish forces; and, at the same time, in order to ingratiate himself the more with Cnut, requested to be sent against the Saxon army. This trust being accordingly reposed upon him, a great part of Cnut's army was committed to his care, with which he joined those forces he had brought with him, and marched out against the English, with whom he fought a sharp battle at a place called *Scorastan*, and obtained a complete victory, though the Saxon forces far exceeded his own. This signal performance placed him high in the esteem of Cnut, who failed not to reward him for his courage §.

After this action, Cnut, with his navy, coasted from Sandwich about the river Frome, and sailing round Kent, at last landed, and with fire and sword, made his way through the counties of Dorset, Somerset, and part of Wiltshire. Æthelred, in the mean time, lay dangerously ill at *Cosham* in the last mentioned county, so that the management of the war was committed to Eadmund, the king's son, and Edric, the traitorous duke of Mercia, who were both of them now employed

\* Thus Mat. West. declares, which, from the after proceedings of Æthelred, seems likely. It is also added, that these noblemen were slain in the house of Edric, and that the servants without, who attended upon their masters, being clamorous that they did not appear, were beaten back by

the attendants of Edric, and pursued into a church, whence retreating to the steeple to defend themselves, they were there shut up, and burnt to death.

† S. Duelm.

‡ Encom. Emmæ.

§ Ibid.

Cnut returns into Britain.

Turkill revolts from the English.

The proceedings of Cnut.

in different parts of the kingdom, collecting what forces they could. Soon after they united both their armies, and were preparing to march against the foe, when Eadmund had notice given him that his brother-in-law, Edric, was practising means to betray him to the enemy, or else deprive him of life. Upon the receipt of this intelligence, he suddenly disjoined himself from Edric, who, finding that his treason was discovered, fled to the enemy with what forces he could persuade to follow him, and forty large ships. Whereupon almost all the western counties forsook their allegiance to Æthelred, and submitted themselves to Cnut \*.

A. D. 1016. The year following, Cnut, assisted by the traitor Edric, marched with his army along the banks of the Thames as far as Creckland, where he passed the river, and entering Mercia, burnt several cities, and destroyed the country round about, especially in the county of Warwickshire, where his cruelty was the most heavily felt. In the mean time, prince Eadmund collected an army in order to oppose the Danes; but when he entered Mercia, the Mercians obstinately refused to join him, unless his father, with the Londoners, came also to their assistance; so that all this preparation came to nothing †.

Eadmund's preparation against Cnut brought to nothing.

A second preparation, which Cnut brought more than the former. Sometime after, Eadmund, with his army, intreated his father to join him with the Londoners, and such forces as he could collect together. Accordingly, Æthelred complied with his son's request, and being at the point of marching against the enemy with a powerful army, and a fair prospect of success, the expedition was suddenly prevented by report being made to Æthelred, that his own soldiers meant to betray him into the hands of his enemies. Æthelred, daunted by these illusive insinuations, disbanded his army, and returned to London. Thus the second preparation was likewise rendered abortive ‡.

Eadmund and Cnut waste Mercia.

Eadmund, after his father's departure, marched with the forces that he had collected over the Humber, where, being joined by a powerful nobleman named Uthred, he fell upon the counties of Staffordshire, Shropshire and Leicestershire, wasting the country, and destroying the inhabitants, because they refused to assist him against the Danes. In the mean time, Cnut, with his army, harassed the other parts of Mercia, passing through Buckingham, Bedford, Huntington, Nottingham, Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire, where he was not sparing of his cruelties, because they had still continued faithful to their lawful sovereign; so that between the one and the other, almost all Mercia was laid waste §.

Cnut subdues Northumberland.

When Cnut had sufficiently reduced the southern provinces of Mercia, he marched with his army into Northumberland, in order to

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

oppose prince Eadmund, who no sooner heard of his intention, than he disbanded his army, and returned, as hastily as possible, to London, where his father then lay. After his departure, earl Ulfred, being no longer able to withstand the forces which Cnut brought with him, submitted himself to him, with the whole kingdom of Northumberland, and gave him a certain number of hostages. Yet, notwithstanding this submission of Uthred, he was shortly after slain by one Turebrand, a Dane, either by the command or connivance of Cnut; and Iric, a Dane, was made earl of Northumberland in his stead \*.

After Cnut had settled these matters in Northumberland, and received the submission of the inhabitants, he returned to the south, highly pleased with the success he had met with in that expedition, and, about Easter, with all his army, reached his ships, intending, as soon as he conveniently could, to lay a close siege to the city of London †.

Whilst these things were transacting, Æthelred, lying at London, fell into a relapse, and what with the affliction of his mind, joined with those of his body, he died the twenty-third day of April, in the year 1016, being the fiftieth year of his age, and the thirty-seventh of his reign. His body was buried in the cathedral of St. Paul's, at London, where he died ‡.

The character of this prince, as drawn by the monks, is certainly very unfavourable. By them he is said to have been a man of dissolute manners, lustful and lascivious; a promoter of civil discords, and indolent in his disposition. Undoubtedly, he had his faults; but his dislike to the monks, and the preference he gave to the secular priests, may sufficiently account for those faults being magnified, and set in the worst light; especially when those he disliked became his historians. Indeed, as to his indolence in the defence of his country, which seems to have been the best grounded charge they bring against him, it may, perhaps, be somewhat excused, when we recollect his situation among strong parties of various opinions, who, by their professed hatred to him, or secret treachery, made him fearful of exerting the utmost of his abilities; and, after all, the swift progress the Danes made towards the conquest of England during his reign, was certainly not so much owing to the inaction of the king, as it was to the want of unity in his subjects themselves; for, in more than one instance, by neglecting the commands of their leaders, or by the treachery of the leaders themselves, the victory was secured to the Danes, and, by these means, they became the chief instruments of their own

\* S. Dunelm.

† Ibid.

‡ This monument was remaining in old

St. Paul's when Speed wrote his chronicle.

"It remaineth" (saith my author) "in

the north wall of the chancel."—"A grey marble chest, raised upon four small pillars, and covered with a copped stone of the same." Speed Chron. page 366.

ruin. As to the insidious charge of lasciviousness which is brought against him by some, that appears to have been false to a degree, since we have no certain account of any concubine kept by him, or of any illegitimate issue, which most likely would have been the effect of such connections. His person was tall and graceful, and his visage handsome; he was cheerful in his disposition, and perfectly free and affable in his carriage; he paid a great regard to justice, and established several good laws for the benefit of his subjects.

Æthelred's first wife, and issue by her.

Æthelred had two wives, the first Alfgifa\*, the daughter of a Saxon duke named Thored. She was married to him when he was but seventeen years of age, in the year 983, and died in the year 1001. By this lady he had issue six sons and four daughters.

Æthelstan, the eldest son, was born in the year 987; he lived until he was almost twenty years of age, from which time nothing more is heard of him; from whence authors in general have been led to conclude, that he was either taken off by some illness, or slaughtered in the wars against the Danes.

Egbert, the second son, seems to have been born about two years after his brother. In the year 1004, he witnessed a charter of his father's †. This prince died in his father's life-time, towards the latter end of his reign; but at what time cannot precisely be pointed.

Eadmund, the third son, was born in the year 990. He succeeded his father in the kingdom.

Eadred, the fourth son, was born in the year 993, and was a constant witness to his father's charters till the year 1014, about which time it was supposed he died, as his name does not occur afterwards.

Edwy, the fifth son, survived his father, and was murdered in the reign of king Cnut.

Eadgar, born in the year 999, is supposed to have died young.

The name of the eldest daughter of Æthelred is not recorded. We learn, however, that she was married to a nobleman named Æthelstan, who commanded the Cambridgeshire men in the battle against Cnut in the year 1010, where he was slain.

Edgitha, the second daughter, was married to Edric Stratton, duke of Mercia.

Elfgive, the third daughter, was married to Uthred, surnamed the Bold, son of earl Waldolfe, earl of Northumberland. He was slain by the Danes in the year 1016. By this nobleman she had one daughter named Aldgith, who married Maldred, by whom she had Gospa-

\* Notwithstanding Bromton, who is most desperately severe against Æthelred, would have us believe that this woman was only his concubine, and, of course, her issue bastards; but this is contradicted by such a cloud of witnesses, that it needs no refutation.

† Of lands to a monastery at Burton.

trick, who was earl of Northumberland when William the Conqueror sat upon the throne.

Gode, the fourth daughter, married Walter de Maigne, a nobleman of Normandy, highly favoured by her half brother Edward. She had issue by this husband, and outlived him. After his death, she was married to Eustace of Bulloigne, a faithful friend to her brother Edward.

The second wife of Æthelred was Emma (called by the Saxons Elf-<sup>Second wife of Æthelred, and his issue.</sup>giva). She was sister to the duke of Normandy, and was married to Æthelred in the year 1002. She survived her husband—by this lady Æthelred had two sons.

Edward, the eldest, was chiefly brought up in France. He succeeded his half-brother Hardycnut in the kingdom.

Ælfred, the younger, was slain by Harold, the son of Cnut, as we shall see hereafter.

E A D M U N D, *surnamed* IRONSIDES.*The fifteenth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

A. D. 1016.

Divisions in the kingdom.

**A**FTER the death of Æthelred, the kingdom was divided into two powerful factions. Such of the nobility as were at London, as well as the citizens themselves, immediately declared for Eadmund, the eldest surviving son of their deceased king, and he was accordingly crowned, as some report, at Kingston upon Thames, by Livingus, archbishop of Canterbury. In the mean time, others of the nobility, and the far greater part of the clergy, sided with Cnut, and meeting him at Southampton, elected him as their king. At the same time, they renounced before him all fidelity to the race of Æthelred, and swore fealty to him, who, on his part, also took an oath that, in matters both religious and secular, he would be their faithful protector\*.

Cnut besieges London.

Eadmund, hearing of the advancement of Cnut, immediately after his coronation hastened into Wessex, where he was received with great joy by the principal part of the West Saxons, who acknowledged him as their king, and whose example was followed by the people of many other provinces. Whilst Eadmund was thus employed, Cnut, about the middle of May, with all his fleet, entered the Thames, and sailed up to the city of London; and having, by the means of a large dike, which he caused to be made on the Surrey side of the Thames, towed his ships round London bridge into the river on the west side, he invested the city itself with a close siege, throwing up a trench all around it, so as to cut off all communication with the country. Soon after, he attempted to carry the city by assault; but it was so valiantly defended by the citizens within, that his army was obliged to retire without success†.

Eadmund overcomes the Danes at Penham.

Cnut, after his repulse at London, abandoned the siege for some time, and leaving part of his army to guard his fleet which he left near that city, with the remainder of his forces he marched speedily into Wessex, in order to attack king Eadmund suddenly, before he

\* S. Dunelm, &amp;c.

† Ibid.

had

had sufficiently compleated his army; but this hasty expedition of Cnut's did not produce the desired effect; for Eadmund, hearing of the approach of the Danes, determined to give them battle with the forces he had already with him. Both armies met at Penham, near Gillingham in Dorsetshire, where, after an obstinate action, the Danes were put to flight with considerable slaughter\*.

This victory gave such consequence to Eadmund that his little army was soon augmented, so that he was determined to follow his enemies, and try once more the fortune of the field. Accordingly, about Midsummer, the two armies met again at a place called Sheraftan in Worcester-shire, where the Hampshire and Wiltshire men joined the Danish army. However, Eadmund, and his party, were determined to maintain their ground, and give battle to their invaders. A long and bloody action ensued, which lasted the whole day without any manifest advantage on either side. In the morning, they renewed the conflict, and the Saxons began to prevail against their opponents, which being perceived by the traitor Edric, he cut off the head of a man named Osmer, whose hair and countenance greatly resembled king Eadmund, and holding it up in his hand, shewed it to the English, at the same time calling aloud to them, that king Eadmund was slain, and that therefore they ought to save themselves by a speedy flight. This stratagem had such an effect, that many of the Saxons began to give ground, which being made known to king Eadmund, he hastened to a place where he might be seen by his army, and encouraging his men from thence, they renewed the fight, and made a great slaughter amongst the Danes; but the approach of night prevented either party from obtaining the victory. The third day, both armies are said to have appeared in the field; but there was nothing done on either side more than the burying of the dead. The succeeding night, Cnut, thoroughly sensible of the loss which he had already sustained, marched away silently under covert of the darkness, and hastened, with all speed, towards London, intending to renew the siege of that city†.

After the battle of Sheraftan, Eadmund returned to Wessex, in order to recruit his army; at which time, Edric, his traitorous brother-in-law, quitted the Danes, and having obtained pardon of Eadmund, swore loyalty to him, and entered a third time into the Saxon army; but the event fully proved the treachery of his heart, whose only intentions were the more speedily to promote the interest of Cnut, although at the expence of his country, and the life of his lawful sovereign. Eadmund, having reinforced his army, hastened towards London, where Cnut continued the siege, with as little success as

The battle of  
Sheraftan.

\* S. Dunelm, &c.

† Ibid. & vid. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 10.

for-

Edric pardoned  
by king Ead-  
mund.



formerly. The sudden arrival of Eadmund, however, obliged Cnut to raise the siege of the city, and fly to his ships\*.

The Danes  
overcome near  
Brentford.

Two days after that Eadmund had driven the Danes from London, he crossed the Thames at Brentford with his army, which being done too hastily, and not at the proper ford, several of his troops were drowned in the passage; however, he marched his forces with all possible speed towards London, and coming unexpectedly upon the backs of the Danes, gave them a considerable overthrow. After this victory, through the persuasion of Edric, Eadmund concluded a truce with Cnut, and returned with his army again into Wessex †.

Cnut goes into  
Kent.

Eadmund was no sooner departed into Wessex, than Cnut, not in the least regarding the truce he had agreed upon, returned to London, and once more renewed the siege; but still the valour of the besieged rendered all his attempts ineffectual: therefore, departing thence with his navy, he entered a river called Arrene, from whence he fell upon the borders of Mercia, wasting the country, and obtaining great spoils. After this he ordered all his foot to enter on board his ships, and sail round through the Thames into the river Medway, where they were met by the horse, who made their passage thither over land, taking great spoils in their way ‡.

The battle at  
Oxford.

Whilst Cnut was thus employed, Eadmund was not idle; for, having increased his army by powerful reinforcements from several of the principal shires, he came again in search of his enemy, and hearing that he was gone into Kent, he crossed the Thames again at Brentford, and followed him to Oxford, where a bloody battle was fought, in which the Danes were totally routed §; so that, had Eadmund resolutely pursued the advantages he had gained by this victory, it is generally thought that he might easily have put an end to the war at once, by a compleat conquest of his foes: but he was persuaded from following the Danes by the plausible councils of the arch traitor Edric, who, by that means, procured time for Cnut to make his escape.

The battle of  
Ashdown.

Cnut, in the utmost consternation, after the above defeat, fled with the remainder of his army to the Isle of Sheppy, from whence he passed with all expedition into Essex, where, having once more recruited his army, he began to pillage the country. But king Eadmund, having made proper preparation, followed him into Essex, and at Ashdown || the two armies met, and a bloody engagement ensued, in which the Saxons at the first prevailed; but this being perceived by

\* S. Dunelm, &c.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Some declare that Cnut lost, in this engagement, 4500 of his soldiers, whilst, on the other hand, the Saxons lost only 600. Vide Speed, page 370.

|| Some place this action at Ashendon, near Bartlow, upon the confines of Essex, near Cambridgeshire; but others at a place of the same name, near Rochford in Essex.

Edric the traytor, he fled with that part of the army which he commanded, agreeable to a promise he had made to Cnut, and by that means the Danes obtained a compleat victory.—In this fatal action, fell the earls Alfric and Godwyn, also Ulfkettel, the earl of the East Angles, and Æthelward his son, with the far greater part of the Saxon nobility; so that the English had not, for a long time, felt so fatal a blow\*.

After the defeat at Ashdown, Eadmund left the field of battle, and, with the little remains of his army, made the best of his way to Gloucester, where he was indefatigable to collect fresh forces, in order once more to make head against the Danes. Cnut, however, pursued him as he fled, and in his way the Londoners submitted themselves to him†. He came up with the army of the Saxons at a place called Deorhifst, on the western banks of the Severn, and, as they stood on either side prepared for the battle, by some means or other, a reconciliation took place, and the matter was mitigated between Eadmund and Cnut‡, the former consenting that the latter should reign jointly with him; himself was to possess the country of the West Saxons and all the south, whilst Cnut was to reign over Mercia and all the north.—These matters being agreed upon, Eadmund and Cnut met together on a small island called Alney, near Gloucester, in the midst of the Severn, where, in the sight of both armies, they embraced each other, and confirmed the covenant by interchanging their arms and the habits they wore; and afterwards, having settled every matter relative to the agreement, both retired in peace with their forces, in order to take possession of their different allotments.

The kingdom was at last, by this unexpected agreement, restored to peace, and each monarch seemed perfectly contented with the dominions that had been allotted to him; when soon after, about the feast of the apostle saint Andrew, Eadmund suddenly died at London, but

\* Malmfb. S. Dunelm, &c.

† S. Dunelm.

‡ The general received account concerning this agreement, as given by S. Dunelm, H. Hunt. M. West. &c. and their followers, is, that when both armies were prepared for battle, the nobles affirmed, that, to save blood-shed, the two chiefs of the armies should themselves alone try the decision of the field; accordingly Eadmund challenged Cnut to single combat, which challenge being accepted by him, they both of them entered the little island (Alney) in the midst of the Severn, and fought with each other in the sight of their armies; but in the end, Cnut, perceiving that his antagonist was too powerful for

him, sought to compromise the matter with him. The division of the kingdom was then proposed, and accepted of by Eadmund, wherefore they both threw down their arms and embraced each other, to the great joy and satisfaction of both armies.----But W. Malmfbury denies that Cnut accepted of the challenge, declaring, that although he did not want courage, yet he was not imprudent enough, being himself a slender man, to encounter with one of Eadmund's strength and stature; but though he refused to fight, yet he proposed the division of the kingdom, which was readily agreed to by Eadmund and the Saxon nobles. Vide Malmfb. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. 2. cap. 10.

not without suspicion of treason. And the infamy of this action is laid to the traitor Edric, who, it is thought, in order to ingratiate himself the more in the favour of Cnut, suborned two officers of Eadmund's bed-chamber to murder him, when he retired to his privy closet\*.—His corpse was carried from London to Glastonbury, and buried, with all due solemnities, by the side of his grandfather, Eadgar the Peaceable.

Person and character of king Eadmund.

Eadmund was of a tall, graceful stature, and his limbs were endowed with great strength, so that he endured all the fatigues of war with such fortitude, that he had thenceforth the surname of Ironsides† bestowed upon him. He was a man of invincible courage, and of an amiable disposition. The rest of his good qualities are not particularly marked by the ancient historians, who, on the other hand, have not reproached him with any particular vice; so that we may reasonably conclude the remainder of his character would have done him honour, had it happily been recorded.

Wife and issue of king Eadmund.

Eadmund had but one wife, who was named Alarith; a lady of singular beauty, and the widow of Sigefrith the Dane, who was slain at Oxford, in the year 1015, by the treason of Edric, as was before mentioned. Eadmund married this lady the same year her husband had been slain, against the consent of his father. By her he had two sons: the eldest, named Edward, was surnamed the Outlaw, because he lived in exile during the government of the Danes in England, but afterwards returned, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, his uncle. The youngest son of Eadmund, was named Eadmund, who was brought up at the court of Salomon, king of Hungary, where he married the daughter of that king, but, as it is thought, died without issue.

\* The murder was done, according to Malmshury, by thrusting a sharp iron up his fundament as he sat at stool. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 10.—But, in short, various are the accounts of this king's death. The author of the *Encomium Emmae*, who lived at the time, and S. Dunelm, seem to have thought that he died a natural death. M. West. H. Hunt. *Scala Chron. & Encom. Emmae*, say he was slain at Oxford; but many other ancient authors agree with Malmshury, that it was at London: but all of them who attribute his death to an un-

natural cause, agreed that it was through the procurement and treason of Edric, though the manner of it is also variously related. Vide Hen. de Knyghton, lib. 1. cap. 2. John Bromton, et Randalph de Diceto, &c.

† In Latin *Ferream latus*.—"Qui sic dicebatur (*says Knyghton*) propter probitatem suam, cujus sagitta nunquam in casum reversa, neque gladius in vanum extractus, aut lancea, quandocumque frustrata vibrata."—Hen. de Knyghton de Eventibus Angliæ, lib. 1. cap. 2.

## C N U T, or C A N U T E,

*The second Danish Monarch of ENGLAND.*

NO sooner was the death of Eadmund Ironsides publicly known, A.D. 1017. than Cnut summoned a large council of all the clergy and chief nobility of the realm, where he demanded, in a peremptory manner, of those who had been witnesses to the agreement made between himself and king Eadmund, what the articles of that agreement were,—whether it was stipulated, that after the death of that prince, if Cnut his partner were yet living, that his sons or his brothers should enjoy his possessions, or whether the whole should descend from him to Cnut?—The nobles called upon, being over-awed by the presence of Cnut, and fearful of offending him, for they presently understood the meaning of the subtle demand, and therefore, to ingratiate themselves with him, they replied (as some historians have declared, contrary to their consciences) that they well knew that Eadmund had left no part of the kingdom to his sons or to his brethren, either at the time of the agreement or at the time of his death, but that he had intended Cnut should be their guardian until they arrived to the state of manhood.—After this declaration of the witnesses, Cnut laid claim to the whole monarchy, and there were none bold enough to dispute the matter with him; so that, soon after, by the general consent of the people, he was solemnly crowned at London, by Livingus, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1017\*.

As soon as Cnut mounted the throne of England, he cast an eye of jealousy upon Edwy, brother to the deceased Eadmund, a prince in great favour amongst the English. His banishment therefore was at first resolved upon; but Cnut, fearing that he might perhaps hereafter return to disturb him, could not think himself securely seated upon the throne, until, by some means or other, he was effectually removed: he therefore consulted Edric, who was always ready to assist him in murders or treasons, and, by his advice, one Ethelward, a nobleman fallen to decay, was tempted by great offers to undertake the murder

Cnut's stratagem to secure the whole kingdom to himself.

Edwy, brother to Eadmund, slain.

\* S. Duncelm, &amp;c.

of the prince; but he, being too humane for the employment, still delayed from time to time, alledging that he could not find a convenient opportunity. Shortly after this, Cnut, perceiving that the matter might be made worse by delay, restored Edwy to favour, and caused him to be treated with all due respect; when, in the height of his prosperity, he was murdered by some of his pretended friends, at the instigations of Cnut and his wicked instrument Edric\*.

The two sons of Eadmund sent into Sweden.

Edwy being now removed, gave some ease to the jealousies of Cnut; but the two sons of the unfortunate Eadmund still alarmed his repose. Edric advised him to dispatch them also, as he had done their uncle; but Cnut, justly imagining that so much blood, shed by his own hand, or in his own dominions, would render him odious to his subjects, he therefore sent them into Sweden, in order that they might be privately murdered there. But the king of Sweden, detesting so much cruelty, positively refused to perform the commission of Cnut, and, in order to place the young princes in a state of greater security from such attempts, he sent them to Solomon, the king of Hungary, at whose court they were brought up in a manner becoming their rank†.

Cnut divides the kingdom.

Cnut, thus settled in his throne, turned his attention to the government of his possessions, and, in order to hold them the more securely, he divided his territories into four parts, one of which he governed himself, and the other three he committed to the care of viceroys, or chieftains, who governed under him. All the dominions of the West Saxons he held himself, the East Angles he committed to the charge of earl Turkill, Mercia to Edric, and the Northumbrians to Eoric; after which he confirmed a peace with all the neighbouring people‡.

Cnut marries Emma.

The next step that Cnut took was a very political one, namely, the marrying of Emma, the widow queen of Ethelred, by which means he ingratiated himself in the favour of the Normans, and also of the Saxons, who, though they at first were averse to this marriage, as well as Emma herself, yet, on mature consideration, it was esteemed the most likely to prevent any future discords; so that, by degrees, the people became well satisfied with the yoke that was laid upon their shoulders§. And at the marriage of Cnut with this lady, it was stipulated that his children by her should succeed him in the kingdom, and no other.

Edric slain.

During the Christmas feast, in the same year, Edric (whose character is justly stigmatized with the name of traitor) suspecting that Cnut, notwithstanding the shew of favour that was made to him, did not mean him well at the bottom of his heart, took the liberty of remon-

\* This prince, from his melancholy deportment, was called the *King of Charles*; or, according to the *Scala Chronica*, *King of Villains*.

† S. Dunelm.

‡ Ibid.

§ Encom. Emmæ, &c.

frating to him the services he had done for him, in betraying the country into his hands. This remonstrance, it seems, was very ill timed; for Cnut, recollecting the villainy of the man, and knowing, perhaps, that he had no farther occasion for him, instead of returning him thanks for those services he boasted of, he reproached him as a traitor, and pretending to judge him from his own confession\*, caused him to be slain, and his body cast out of a window into the Thames; but his head was set up on one of the gates of London†.—About the same time three other noblemen were put to death by the command of Cnut, not for any fault on their part, but because he was jealous of them, and fearful that they should be designing mischief against him: their names were, Northman, the son of Leofwin; Ethelward, son of earl Agelmar; and Brithric, the son of Elfegus, a nobleman of Devonshire‡.

In the beginning of the next year, Cnut laid a heavy tax upon the Saxons, in order to raise a large sum of money to pay his army, who were not yet disbanded, notwithstanding the appearances of peace. The sum he now collected amounted to seventy-two, if not eighty-two thousand pounds, besides fifteen thousand pounds which were exacted from the Londoners alone§.

This year also, an extensive war broke out in the north, at Carrum, between the Northumbers, and the Scots assisted by Eugenius king of Lothian; but it seems to have been concluded without the assistance of Cnut, because we hear no more of its continuance from this time. The true occasion, or the success of the war, is hastily passed over||.

The same year a great council of state was held at Oxford, in which it was agreed upon between the Danes and the Saxons, that both parties should faithfully observe the laws of Eadgar.

\* For it is reported that Edric declared to Cnut, that, for his sake, he had first pulled from his throne his lawful sovereign, Eadmund, and afterwards murdered him. To this Cnut answered angrily, "Traitor to God and me, thou shalt die! Thine own mouth accuses thee to have slain thy sovereign, my confederate brother, and the Lord's anointed;" and thereupon caused him to be slain.—Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 11.

† In this manner fulfilling an ambiguous promise that he made to Edric, who, when he had murdered Eadmund (according to the report of some) cut off his head, and carried it to Cnut, saying, "All hail! thou art now sole monarch of England; for see here the head of thy copartner,

which, for thy sake, I have stricken off.—Cnut, though desirous of the death of Eadmund, was yet abashed at the openness of the treason; however, dissembling the emotions of his heart, he looked earnestly upon Edric, and declared he would lift up his head above any of the peers of the realm. Which Edric imagining would be by the honours conferred upon him, he impatiently waited the confirmation of the promise, which at last came upon him, not as he expected, but as he deserved.—Bromton, &c.

‡ Encom. Emmae.

§ Ibid.

|| S. Dunelm, &c.

**A. D. 1019.** The year following, Cnut, having settled all things in England to his entire satisfaction, sailed with a strong army into Denmark, in order to suppress some troubles that were breaking out in his dominions there, occasioned by an insurrection of the Swedes, who had taken the advantage of his absence to raise this commotion. Cnut, immediately upon his arrival in Denmark, hastened towards the enemy to give them battle; and whilst the two armies lay in view of each other, the very night before they were to engage, earl Godwin, with a powerful band of Saxon soldiers that were brought by Cnut to assist him, stole privately out of the camp, and falling suddenly upon the enemies, won the victory by break of day, before Cnut had received information of the battle being began. This action, which shewed the zeal of the Saxons for their king, and their desire to signalize themselves in his right, had the desired effect; for, from that time forward, Cnut held the Saxons in much higher esteem than he had done before. Peace being in this manner restored in Denmark, Cnut abode there during the Winter\*.

**A. D. 1020.** In the Spring following, Cnut returned into England; where he found all his dominions in perfect peace. Eight succeeding years he now spent in perfect tranquillity, during which space he made such necessary regulations as were required, and banished the two viceroys Turkill and Eric, the former of which presided over the East Angles; and the latter over Northumberland; and, in regard to Mercia, he seems to have taken the government of that into his own hands immediately after the death of Edric. There is no other reason assigned for the banishment of the two above mentioned noblemen than the jealousy of Cnut, who began to be in fear of their increasing power and consequence †.

**A. D. 1028.** In the year 1028, Cnut sailed with a powerful fleet into Norway, and invaded that kingdom. On his landing, he was joined by a strong party of the Norwegians, who had been gained over to espouse his cause against their own sovereign, by many bribes and valuable presents, which Cnut had conveyed to them the preceding year by such people of trust as he had appointed for that purpose. His success was such that he presently subdued the country, and dispossessed Olave, the Norwegian king, who shortly after was slain by his own subjects; so that upon his death, Cnut was chosen king of Norway, which additional honour was not a little pleasing to him. The grounds of this quarrel between Cnut and Olave are not so clearly made out by the ancient historians as one might wish. However, Cnut it seems accused him of aiding some commotions that were made amongst his Danish subjects, which he had done because

\* S. Dunelm.

† Malmesbury, S. Dunelm, &c.

Cnut had not made him any recompence for the assistance he had given him in the conquest of England\*.

The year following, Cnut returned to England with additional glory, being now king of England, of Denmark, and Norway. Soon after his return, one Hacun, a Danish nobleman, who had married the daughter of his sister Gunhild, and who was grown very powerful in the kingdom, became offensive to him. Cnut, therefore, under the colour of sending him to some foreign court, charged with an embassy from him, dispatched Hacun from England, and such means were used as effectually prevented his return, being, as was supposed, slain by the command of his uncle †.

A.D. 1029.  
Hacun, a Dane, though it be put to death.

Two years after Cnut went over into Denmark again, from whence A.D. 1031. (giving way to the superstition of the times) he went to Rome in order to expiate for the blood which he had shed in his way to the dignities he enjoyed. In a letter, which he sent from Rome, to Ailnoth, archbishop of Canterbury ‡, he declares, that his reason for taking that journey was in honour of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul; but many authors that have treated on this subject, seem rather to think that it was his vanity that occasioned his journey, in order ostentatiously to shew his greatness and riches. He gave great gifts at Rome of gold, silver, and jewels, at the same time making vows at the sepulchre of the two apostles to amend his future life; also by the way, both as he went, and as he returned, he distributed alms to a prodigious amount, and freed many places from tolls and imposts where travellers were wont to pay certain sums of money §.

Cnut goes to Rome.

Upon his return into England the following year, he built a church which he dedicated to St. Eadmund, the unfortunate king of the East Angles, who was slain by the Danes, as hath been already mentioned. This done, he once more placed himself at the head of his army, and marching into the north, subdued Scotland, and received homage of Malcolme, and of two other northern kings named Melbeath and Jamare ||.

A.D. 1032.  
Scotland subdued.

About the same time, he made his eldest son Sweyn, king of Norway, which he had conquered four years before; and Hardicnut, his son by queen Emma, he seated upon the throne of Denmark, intending to bestow the crown of England upon Harold, his second son by a former wife, and brother to Sweyn ¶.

Cnut provides for his sons.

\* S. Dunelm, &c.

† Ibid.

‡ Vide de Malmsh. de Gest. Reg. Angl.

lib. 2. cap. 11.

§ Hen. Hunt.

|| Ibid. & S. Dunelm.

¶ Scala Chron. &c.



**A. D. 1035.** The remainder of Cnut's reign was spent in profound tranquillity, during which time he seems to have studied the benefit of his subjects, by making several necessary regulations, and attending to a due administration of justice. On the 12th day of December, in the year 1035, Cnut died at Shaftesbury, greatly lamented, after a glorious reign of upwards of eighteen years, and his body was solemnly buried in the church of the old monastery of Winchester.

The death of  
Cnut.

Character of  
Cnut.

Cnut was a man of small stature, but endued with an enterprising spirit; whatever great designs his unbounded ambition, and love of power lead him to undertake, he always pursued them with such assiduity, that, in the end, he constantly triumphed over all the difficulties that fell in his way, and rested not till his undertakings were completed. For temperance and justice he far exceeded any of the neighbouring princes of his time, though some have accused him of pride and ostentation. However, several of his actions seem rather to have proved his humility and condescension\*. His greatest crimes were those his ambition caused him to commit; for, as he gained the throne of England by force, he was obliged to dip his hands in blood to secure the same—of this he seems himself to be convinced; and, in the latter part of his reign, endeavoured to make atonement for the blood he had spilt, by his justice and piety, the latter of which, according to the custom of those times, frequently bordered upon superstition.

Cnut's first wife,  
and her issue.

Cnut had two wives, the first was Alfyfu † of Northampton, the daughter of earl Alfhelm, a nobleman of Mercia; and her mother is said to have been named Ulfrune, inheritrix of Hampton in Staffordshire, called after her Ulfrune Hampton, and now by corruption Wolverhampton. By this lady he had two sons—Sweyn, the eldest, who was by his father made king of Denmark, and Harold, the youngest, who succeeded his father in the crown of England ‡.

The

\* Huntingdon reports of this king, that one day, when his courtiers were extolling his actions, and praising him as a god—he rebuked them in the following manner. He caused his royal seat to be placed on the sea shore whilst the tide was flowing in, and spoke thus to the sea:—"Sea, thou belongest to me, and the land I sit upon is mine—nor have any unpunished resisted my commands. I charge thee rise no higher on my land, neither presume to wet the feet of thy sovereign Lord."—But the tide flowing in, and wetting the borders of his garments, he rose up angry with his flatterers, and desired them to be convinced of the limited power of a mortal king, declaring, at the same time, that none merited that title but he who could

govern heaven, earth, and seas. Huntingdon lib. 2.

† Some authors have not scrupled to declare, that this woman was not the wife, but the concubine of Cnut; but besides other good authority in the Register of Hyde abbey, an ancient Saxon MS in the possession of J. Aitke, Esq; there is a portrait of her and Cnut, who jointly hold a cross, and over her head is written,

"*Alfyfa Regina.*"

This drawing is copied in the first volume of a work, entituled, *popda Angelcynnian*, or the manners and customs of the English; vid. plate 38.

‡ It is a strange story that is reported by T. Redbourne, R. Higden, and the author

The second wife of king Cnut was Emma, the widow of Æthelred, <sup>The second-  
wife of Cnut,  
and her issue.</sup> who survived him. By Emma he had issue one son and one daughter. Hardicnut, the son, was born in the beginning of his father's reign, and towards the latter end of the same, was made king of Denmark, where he was when his father died. He afterwards succeeded his half brother Harold in the throne of England. Guineam, the daughter, a young lady of great beauty, married (in her father's life time) to Henry, emperor of Germany.

Cnut is reported to have had another daughter, a woman of great sanctity, who was married to Godescalc, prince of the Vandals. <sup>A supposed  
daughter of  
Cnut.</sup> Both she and her husband suffered martyrdom for the sake of christianity. If Cnut ever had such a daughter, it is highly probable that she was illegitimate, because no mention is made of her in the most ancient and authentic histories, where all his lawful issue is said to be recorded\*.

thor of the Scala Chronica, and others, to this purport:—That Alfgyfu was barren, and in order the better to secure the affection of her husband Cnut, pretended to be with child, and at the time she should have been delivered, caused the new-born son of a certain priest to be brought to her bed, and nursed it as her own, which child was afterwards named Sweyn. In the same manner she deceived Cnut a second time,

nursing the child of a low mechanic, who was named Harold, so that neither of them were really Cnut's children; but the whole of this tale is very improbable, and might perhaps take rise from the usage that Harold's dead body met with from his brother Hardicnut; but it is not mentioned in the most ancient authors.

\* Vide Speed's Chronicle, page 387.

HAROLD,

H A R O L D, *surnamed* H A R E F O O T.*The third Danish Monarch of ENGLAND.*

A. D. 1036. **A**T the time of Cnut's decease, Hardicnut, his son by Emma, who (according to the agreement made at the time of his marriage with that lady) was to succeed him in the kingdom, was absent in Denmark, which gave a favourable opportunity to Harold, the second son of Cnut, by his former wife, who was present at his father's death, of asserting his claim to the crown, which Cnut, in his last testament, had left to him. His claim was supported by all the Danes in general, and the Londoners, as well as the greater part of the northern inhabitants of England\*. On the other hand, Godwin, a powerful nobleman, pretending to be the guardian of the queen-mother and her children, with all the southern provinces, and particularly Wessex, asserted the right of Hardicnut. To settle this dispute, a great council was convened at Oxford, where the matter was argued with much vehemence. However, the presence of Harold, and the arguments of his party, which were the most powerful, prevailed; and it was agreed upon that Harold should mount the throne—not as sole monarch, but in partnership with his half brother, to whom the southern parts of the kingdom were assigned, and for the present were committed to the keeping of Emma, the queen-mother, till her son Hardicnut should arrive to take possession of them†.

Ailnoth objects to Harold.

Notwithstanding the decrees of the council, Harold met with a considerable difficulty at his inauguration; for Ailnoth, the archbishop of Canterbury, who had the keeping of the crown and regal habiliments, peremptorily refused to deliver them up to any but the children of Emma who were the only lawful heirs. However, he was at last, as some have reported, prevailed upon by Harold (who spared no promises nor intreaties) to set the crown upon his head‡.

Harold usurps the whole kingdom.

Harold was no sooner invested with the royal dignity, than he determined to seize the whole kingdom into his own hands. His first step, therefore, towards the completion of his design was to possess himself of his father's treasure which Emma had in her keeping; that

\*. Malmsh. &c.

†. Rog. Hoveden.

‡ Encom. Emma.  
donec

done, he shortly after asserted his authority over Wessex, and the southern provinces that had been designed for his half brother Hardicnut; and because his party was grown very powerful, those who wished well to Emma were obliged to submit quietly to the decrees of Harold.

At the same time, before the departure of queen Emma, Harold, <sup>Ælfred slain by treachery.</sup> by the assistance of earl Godwin, whom he had won over to his party, either by a forged letter as coming from Emma\*, or some other deceit of the like kind, prevailed upon Ælfred, one of her sons by Æthelred, to come from Normandy into England, where he was seized upon at Guilford by Godwin, and his attendants being put to the sword, himself was sent to the isle of Ely, where he had his eyes put out, and shortly after died for want of proper necessaries †. Emma, frightened by the treachery of Harold, fled speedily after the murder of her son into Flanders, where she was honourably received by Baldwin, the earl of that country, and a habitation was assigned her, by his orders, at Bruges, where she was soon after visited by Hardicnut her son, king of Denmark ‡.

Harold, in order the better to support his dominions from the invasion of any foreigner, caused sixteen large Danish vessels to keep the seas, which were continually coasting about, and ready, upon all occasions, to protect the coasts; and, in order to maintain this armament, he exacted great sums of the English, which they were obliged to pay, but not without great murmurings and discontent §.

After a reign of four years, in which nothing that could redound to his honour was transacted, Harold died at London, and his body was buried at Westminster ||.

The person of Harold has not been described by the ancient historians, but he was remarkably swift of foot, which occasioned his receiving the surname of Harefoot. His character is that of a cruel, treacherous, and tyrannizing man—endowed with but few or no conspicuous virtues to counterbalance his defects; so that he was justly disliked by his subjects, and his death seems not to have been regretted even by his own partizans. He does not appear to have had any wife, nor to have left any issue behind him.

\* Encom. Emmae.

† Ibid. &c.

‡ S. Dunelm.

§ Ibid.

|| Rog. Hoveden, Malmfb. Huntingdon, &c. say that he died at Oxford.

## HARDICNUT.

*The fourth Danish Monarch of ENGLAND.*

A. D. 1040.

Hardicnut succeeds Harold.

**A**FTER the death of Harold, the whole kingdom, as well Danes as Saxons, were universally consenting to set Hardicnut, the son of Emma, upon the throne; so that messengers were speedily dispatched to Bruges, where he still remained with his mother, to inform him of his brother's death, and to offer him the crown of England. Hardicnut received these summonses with a great deal of pleasure, and accordingly prepared, as quickly as he conveniently could, to come over into England, and take possession of the honours assigned for him. About Midsummer he arrived, accompanied by sixty Danish vessels and a great number of soldiers, and was joyfully received by the people in general. He first landed in Kent, from whence he was instantly conveyed to London, where he was proclaimed king, and crowned by Ailnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1040, the same year that his half-brother died\*.

He disgraces Harold's dead body.

Hardicnut was scarcely seated upon the throne, before he took upon him to revenge the injuries done to him and his mother by his predecessor Harold. He therefore sent Alfric archbishop of York, earl Godwin, and others, with Froud the executioner, commanding them to take the body of Harold out of his tomb, and to cast it into the Thames, where it was taken up by a fisherman, and conveyed by the Danes to Saint Clement's church, which belonged to them, and there it was again interred†.

He taxes the people.

The same year he also imposed a heavy tax upon the people, in order to pay certain sums of money to his sailors and shipmen. This load of oppression sat heavily on his subjects in general, who now began to be highly discontented with his proceedings, and lamented that they had raised him to rule over them‡.

\* Malmsh. S. Dunelm, &amp;c.

† Chron. Guil. Mulden, &amp;c.

‡ This tax, which was the payment of eight marks to every common sailor, and twelve to an officer or pilot, amounted (says Speed) to the sum of 32,147 pounds.

The same author seems to believe that Godwin counselled the king to do this, in order to make him odious to his people, which he intended to turn to his advantage. ---Speed's Chron. page 527.

At the same time Hardicnut called Godwin earl of Kent, and Leving bishop of Worcester, to account for the murder of his half-brother *Nobles called to account.* Ælfred, of which crime they were accused by Alfric, archbishop of York. The king, in his anger, deprived Leving of his bishopric, and gave it to his accuser; but being the following year pacified by a large sum of money, which Leving caused to be presented to him, the fault was overlooked, and he was again restored to his former possessions. As for Godwin, who could not easily exculpate himself, he made his peace with the king by a magnificent present which he gave him\*, and at the same time took an oath, that what he had done was not by his own will or consent, but by the absolute command of Harold: and the same oath was taken by most of the nobility, either in their own or his behalf.

The next year, as the officers of Hardicnut were collecting in the tax which he had imposed upon the people, two of them, Thurstan and Feader, being too rigorous in the execution of their office, at the city of Worcester, were slain by the citizens; which proceeding so highly exasperated the king, that he sent Leofric, earl of Mercia, and Seward of Northumberland, with a great army, whom he commissioned to destroy all the citizens, and lay waste the city, after they had pillaged it of every thing valuable; and, if they met with any resistance, to ruin the whole province. Affrighted at the news of the king's anger, the citizens and people round about fled from their houses and possessions to a small island in the Severn, called Beverege, where they fortified and defended themselves until peace was granted to them, and permission to return home without molestation. But in the mean time, the city, left defenceless, was pillaged, and burnt to the ground. Ælfred, their bishop, was also expelled from his see, until he purchased his pardon and restoration by the payment of a considerable sum of money †.

Edward, the half-brother of Hardicnut, the only remaining son of Emma by Æthelred, came out of Normandy upon a visit to him, and was by him most affectionately received. If we can confide in the report of several authors, Hardicnut was of an indolent disposition, and left the whole management of the government to his mother Emma, and

\* This present was a sumptuous ship, whose stern was richly ornamented with gold, and all the rigging proportionably grand. Within it were eighty soldiers, whose garments and arms were richly ornamented with gold, each of them having a bracelet of pure gold on either arm, weighing sixteen ounces. Their helmets

were gilt with gold, and the hilts of their swords were of massy gold. Upon their left shoulder they carried each man a Danish axe, and in their right hands they held each a lance, called in English *bateger*. — Malmsh. lib. 2, cap. 12.

† S. Dunelm, &c.

Godwin earl of Kent. It is also reported, that the one was very covetous, and the other a designing, artful courtier; so that, whatever burdens were placed upon the people, the chief blame has been laid upon these two personages, to whom the whole conduct of the kingdom was committed\*.

D. A. 1042. The year following, Hardicnut being present at a marriage feast at Lambeth, where Cnut Prudon, a great Danish nobleman, was wedded to Githa, the daughter of Osgod Clappa, another potent Dane, as they were in the midst of their mirth, the king was suddenly seized with a fit, and falling down speechless, expired presently after. This accident happened on the eighth day of June, in the year 1042, within a few days of the latter end of the second year of his reign; and his body was buried at Winchester, close beside the corpse of his father Cnut †.

The character of Hardicnut. This prince, from his strength and hardness of body, obtained the addition of Hardi to his name, which was at first only Cnut, after his father. He was a man of an open generous temper, and pleasing in his carriage towards his friends. He particularly delighted in keeping a plentiful house, and was himself so fond of feasting, that his table was spread with a superfluity of the greatest dainties four times in one day: so that, by his example, gluttony and intemperance were greatly encouraged amongst the nobility of England ‡.—His political character we know but little of; yet, from the general opinions of the ancient historians, it appears that he was very indolent, and neglectful of the affairs of state, constantly committing them to the determination of Emma his mother, and Godwin earl of Kent, as was before observed.

The death of Hardicnut pleasing to the Saxons. After the death of Hardicnut, who was the last prince of the Danish race, the Saxons freed themselves from the galling yoke which had so long been imposed upon them; and the day of his death was, in after-times (as some of our modern authors have asserted) celebrated with games and pastimes, and parading about the streets, which time was called Huxtide, or a time of scorning and contempt §.

Hardicnut leaves no issue. Hardicnut was never married, so that he left no issue behind him to claim the crown after his death.

\* Vide Speed's Chron. page 526.

† Malmsh. de Gest. Reg. Angl. S. Du-nelm, &c.

‡ H. Hunt. &c.

§ Vide Lambard's Peramb. of Kent, in Sandwich; and Speed's Chron. fol. 527.





E D W A R D, *surnamed The CONFESSOR.**The sixteenth Saxon Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

UPON the decease of Hardicnut, Edward, the son of Æthelred, A. D. 1043. his half-brother, was yet remaining at the Saxon court, and being greatly doubtful for his own safety, placed all his confidence in the advice and favour of earl Godwin, whom he knew to be the most potent nobleman in the realm; he therefore instantly dispatched messengers to the earl, intreating a private audience with him. The earl hesitated for a while; but afterwards, conceiving that he might make his advantage of the weakness of young Edward, he consented to the interview. Edward instantly came to him, and would have fallen at his feet, but was prevented by him. The prince then represented to him the danger that he conceived himself to be in, and besought him to contrive some safe method of conveying himself out of the land. To this request Godwin artfully made answer, that he ought to recollect that he was the son of Æthelred, the grandchild of Eadgar, and the right heir to the Saxon crown, and also at full age to lay claim to it; so that he ought not to think of flying the kingdom, but of mounting the throne.—Godwin then wished him to consider what interest he himself had with the people, which he would be ready to exert in his favour, if, in return, he would swear to be his friend, to preserve the honour of his house, and also to marry his daughter. The proposal of Godwin was presently assented to by the prince, who, considering the danger of a refusal, readily swore to whatever Godwin required.—After this agreement, an assembly of the nobles and clergy was summoned at Gillingham, wherein Edward pleaded his right; and, by the powerful influence of Godwin, his claim being accepted, he was acknowledged as their sovereign, and the Easter following was crowned king, at Winchester\*, amidst the acclamations of the people, who were highly delighted at their sudden and unexpected deliverance from the Danish yoke.—Edward began his reign in the year 1043, himself being at that time almost forty years of age.

The accession  
of Edward.

\* W. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 13.

Edward seizes  
his mother's  
treasure.

Shortly after he was crowned, he returned to Winchester, and seized upon the treasure of his mother Emma; and the reason assigned for this action was, that she had not behaved towards him, during the time of his exile, with becoming tenderness: and, indeed, it is thought by some, that she never had any great affection for Æthelred himself, or any of his children. She is also noted as a very covetous woman, and devoid of charity to the distressed; yet she was, however, over bounteous to the monks and their monasteries\*.

Edward mar-  
ries Edgitha.

The same year, according to the promise he had made to Godwin before his advancement, he married Edgitha, the daughter of that earl, a lady of great beauty, and justly commended for her modesty, condescension, and (what was at that time most extraordinary) her learning, in which she far excelled any of her sex that were cotemporary with her†.

A. D. 1045.

An invasion  
threatened.

Two years after the coronation of Edward, an invasion was threatened by Magnus, king of Norway, which occasioned him to put the kingdom in a proper posture of defence; nor was this matter delayed, for a powerful fleet was fitted out at Sandwich, to oppose the Norwegians whenever they should arrive. But this preparation proved needless; for Sweyne, king of Denmark, by invading Norway, prevented the execution of the design of Magnus, by rendering his presence absolutely necessary at home, to defend his own territories‡.

A. D. 1047.

Sweyne intrusts  
the aid of king  
Edward in vain.

Two years after, Sweyne, being overpowered by Magnus, sent ambassadors into England, entreating assistance from king Edward, and Godwin advised him to send fifty ships, with a large army of soldiers, to his aid; but this advice being strenuously opposed by Leofric, earl of Mercia, and the far greater part of the nobility, none were sent§.

A. D. 1048.

The king of  
Norway makes  
peace with Ed-  
ward.

The next year matters took a turn in Norway and Denmark, occasioned by the death of Magnus; so that Sweyne was restored to Denmark, and Harold Harfager succeeded to the kingdom of Norway, who no sooner mounted the throne than he dispatched messengers into England, to king Edward, offering him peace and amity; which was accepted by him, to the great satisfaction of either party||.

Accidental ca-  
lamities.

The same year a great earthquake at Worcester and Derby did considerable damage. This misfortune, which happened in the beginning of March, was quickly followed by other great calamities, as a pestilence and a famine, by which many thousands perished¶.

\* W. Malmfb.

† Ingulphus.

‡ S. Dunelm.

§ S. Dunelm.

|| Ibid.

¶ Ibid.

The year following, the emperor, Henry the Third, being displeased with Baldwin, earl of Flanders, blocked him up with a great army by land, and at the same time sent messengers to king Edward, intreating him to block him up by sea, in order to prevent his escape that way. Edward complied with the intreaties of the emperor, and sent a great fleet to Sandwich, which abode there until a reconciliation took place between the emperor and Baldwin\*.

About the same time Sweyne, one of the sons of Godwin earl of Kent, deflowered Edgiva, the abbess of Chester †, and would have put away his wife in order to have married her; but being for that offence banished the kingdom, he went over into Denmark, from whence returning with eight ships some time after, under the pretence of seeking his pardon of the king, he traiterously slew his cousin-german Beorn, who had generously undertaken to plead in his behalf. The reason of this murder, though justly condemned by the ancient historians, is not recorded. However, after he had slain Beorn, the matter being made known, six of his ships were taken by the inhabitants of Hastings, in Suffex, and brought to the king, who then lay at Sandwich; the other two (in one of which was Sweyne himself) escaped, and returned to Denmark.—These treacherous proceedings still heightened the anger of Edward against Sweyne; however, some time after he obtained his pardon, by the earnest intreaties of Aldred, bishop of Worcester, and returned into England ‡.

In the same year some Danish pirates, under the conduct of two chieftains, named Lothen and Hirlen, landed at Sandwich, where they pillaged the country round about, and from thence sailed to Essex, where they disembarked, and spoiled the country bordering on the sea coasts; they then sailed to Flanders with the great spoils they had obtained, and sold them there: after which they returned home, contented with their expedition§.

About the same time certain Irish pirates, with sixteen ships, entered the mouth of the Severn, and did considerable damage, being assisted in their depredations by Griffith, prince of South Wales. They proceeded as far as the river Wey, which they passed, and burnt Dunedham, slaying all the inhabitants they found, and plundering the country round about.—To oppose these ravagers, Aldred, bishop of Worcester, with some assistance from the counties of Gloucester and Hereford, took the field; but some of the Welchmen, who composed a part of the bishop's army, sent private messengers to Griffith, informing him of the preparations that were made against him. Griffith no sooner received this information, than he marched forward with his

\* S. Dunelm.

† Mat. West.

‡ Edgivam *Leonenfis* monasterii abbatif. fam.—Rog. Hoveden, pars prior.

§ Hen. Hunt. lib. 6.

whole power, and falling suddenly upon the English in the night-time, whilst they were unprepared for the battle, slew a prodigious number, and put the rest to flight.—After this conquest, fearful perhaps that greater preparation would speedily be made against them, if they continued to pillage the country, they returned to their own homes, contented for the present with the spoils they had obtained\*.

Emma, the  
king's mother,  
passes the Or-  
deal.

In the year 1050, or somewhere near that time, according to the report of some of the historians of the middle ages †, Emma, the queen-mother, was accused by Robert archbishop of Canterbury (a Norman who had been advanced to that dignity by king Edward) not only of having been consenting to the murder of Ælfred her son, the brother of king Edward, but also that she had prepared poison in order to dispatch him also; and, further, that she had been guilty of incontinence with Alwin, bishop of Winchester.—These heavy accusations she heartily denied, and offered to prove her innocence by the Ordeal law; accordingly she passed, blindfold and bare-footed, over nine red hot plough-shares, placed at unequal distances, without receiving the least injury. Her innocence being thus established, Edward restored her to her former honours, and released Alwin. At the same time, it is added, Robert, being ashamed of his accusation, fled the realm.—This story, however, has been very much suspected, because it is not to be found in the histories of the more ancient writers ‡.

A. D. 1051. This year king Edward remitted a very grievous tax, called the Dane-gelt, being a tribute which had been laid upon the people in the days of Æthelred, and had continued eight-and-thirty years to be paid into the king's treasury. He also restored all that remained of this tribute unembezzled, to the right owners.

The Dane-gelt  
remitted.

Edward favours  
the Normans.

Edward is justly accused of favouring the Normans (amongst whom he had been brought up) when he had ascended the Saxon throne, more than was consistent with the good of the common-wealth; for they were by him advanced to great dignities, and placed in some of the highest posts in the government. These proceedings disgusted Godwin, who, as he had set Edward upon the throne, expected more regard would be paid to him; and at the same time he was highly displeased to see so many foreigners advanced above the native nobles of the land; he, however, smothered his resentment for a time, till an unhappy accident had like to have proved fatal to the peace of the

\* S. Dunelm.

† John Bromton, R. Higden, T. Redbourne, &c.

‡ Yet the author of the Annals of Winchester declares, that the nine plough-shares were buried in the west part of the cloisters of the cathedral of Winchester; and it is

also reported that Emma gave to the abbey of St. Swithin (the saint to whom she addressed her vows before her purgation) nine manors, and Alwin nine more, in memory of the nine plough-shares, &c.—Polychron, lib. 6.

nation:—Eustace, earl of Boloign, brother-in-law to king Edward, having been to visit him, and passed through Canterbury in his rout to Dover, where he was to embark in order to return home; on his arrival at Canterbury, one of his followers, seeking insolently to take up his lodging in a house by force, so much provoked the master of it by his haughty behaviour, that either in the height of his passion, or by chance in scuffling with him, he killed him on the spot. Eustace, being informed of this affair, in the heat of his anger went thither with his whole train, and killed not only the man who had slain his servant, but eighteen more who had taken part with him. This rash action justly exasperated the townsmen, who, taking up arms, came against Eustace, and slew one-and-twenty of his train: he himself with great difficulty avoided their fury, and being got out of the city, with one or two of his train who escaped with him, he fled back to king Edward, where he made a grievous complaint against the citizens of Canterbury. Upon this report, king Edward summoned Godwin, the earl of Kent, before him, and, with heavy aggravations, related the matter to him, at the same time commanding the earl to raise forces, and treat the citizens of Canterbury as traitors and enemies to the king. Godwin, sorry to his soul to see what preference was given to strangers, answered hastily, that it would be better first to summons the chief men of the city to the king's court, where they might plead with their accusers—for that, until both parties were heard, it could not be clearly proved who were the aggressors; and then, if, on hearing the arguments on both sides, the citizens appeared in fault, to punish them severely; if not, they ought to stand acquitted: he further added, that he could by no means think of prosecuting his own countrymen, whom it was his office to defend, until their cause was heard, and they were legally condemned. This refusal of Godwin's highly exasperated Edward; but as he was still fearful of the power of Godwin, he dissembled his resentment; and an assembly of all the peers was appointed to be held at Gloucester, where the matter was to be fully tried. But Godwin, imagining that his adversaries would be too powerful for him, had recourse to arms in order to defend his cause: for this purpose he collected together a large army out of his own and his sons earldoms, which contained most of the south-east and south-west parts of the kingdom, and pretended that he had raised this armament in order to go against the Welsh, who, as he declared, intended an invasion in Herefordshire. This being denied by the Welsh, who took the earliest opportunity of clearing themselves from the accusation, the true cause of Godwin's being in arms could not long be concealed. Edward, understanding this, prevailed upon Leofric earl of Chester, Siward earl of Northumberland, and Ranulf earl of Hereford, all three powerful noblemen, and his fast friends, to send privately into their provinces, and raise

what forces they could. Whilst this was transacting, Godwin, not knowing what preparation was making against him, sent boldly to king Edward, and demanded Eustace and his followers. As the forces were not yet arrived to the king's aid, he sent evasive answers back to the earl; but when the army drew nigh, he positively rejected his demand. Godwin, though he found himself over-reached, determined to stand his ground; but, by the intercession of Leofric, and other wise noblemen, the matter was accommodated without blood-shed, so that hostages were given on both sides, and the agreement was, that the matter should be fully debated at London. Accordingly the king and the lords, with their army, which continued to increase, marched to London: thither also came Godwin, with his forces, and lodged at Southwark, on the opposite side of the Thames; but he found that his army decreased daily, by the desertion of his accomplices. On the other hand, Edward had augmented his forces, and soon after, being displeased with the answers of Godwin, he published an edict, commanding Godwin and his sons to depart the land in five days. Godwin, finding that he should, in all probability, be soon deserted by his troops, and left to the mercy of the king, thought it most prudent to obey the command; so that, with his wife and his three sons, Sweyne, Tofti, and Girth, and as much treasure as the ship would carry, he embarked at Thorney, and passed over into Flanders, to earl Baldwin, whose daughter Tofti, Godwin's son, had married: and his two other sons, Harold and Leofwin, took ship at Bristol, and sailed into Ireland\*.

Edward puts  
away his wife.

Immediately after the departure of Godwin and his sons into banishment, Edward put from him his wife Edgitha, whom, though a woman of sweet disposition, he never liked. His only reason of disgust seems to have been, that earl Godwin was her father; a weak and unjust plea! And not content with discarding her from his company, he sent her to the monastery of Wilton, where she was placed under his sister, the abbess there, despoiled of all her ornaments, and allowed only one maiden to attend her—asserting, like a weak and cruel man, that, whilst her nearest relations were in disgrace, and exiled into foreign countries, she ought not to be enjoying her ease at home†.—But this method of revenging the ambition of the father upon the guiltless and undeserving daughter, argues not only a weak mind, but a cowardly disposition.

William duke  
of Normandy  
comes into Eng-  
land.

The same year, William duke of Normady, with a noble retinue, came over into England to visit king Edward, by whom he was received with the greatest marks of respect and affection; and whilst he made his stay in this kingdom, Edward carried him about through most of the cities and large towns, and shewed him such castles as the strength

\* S. Dunelm.

† W. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 13.

of the kingdom most consisted in. It is not improbable, that William might, at this time, have formed in his mind the wish to conquer England, yet it appears very plain from ancient authorities, that Edward made no mention of leaving the crown to him. After William had abode in England some time, Edward conferred several rich gifts upon him, and he returned back to Normandy\*.

In the beginning of the succeeding year, Emma, the mother of A.D. 1052. king Edward, departed this life, and her body was buried in the cathedral at Winchester†. Emma dies.

About the same time Griffith, king of South Wales, entered Herefordshire with a powerful army, and laid great part of that county waste. These proceedings occasioned the inhabitants of Herefordshire to take the field, and being joined by a strong party of Norman soldiers from the castle of Hereford, where they were garrisoned, set upon the enemy; but after a sharp conflict, they were put to flight, and the Welsh remained masters of the field; after which, they plundered the neighbouring country, and returned home laden with spoils‡.

Soon after, in the same year, Harold and Leofwin, the two sons of Godwin, came out of Ireland with a fleet of ships, and entered the river Severn, where they plundered many villages upon the confines of Somerset and Dorset. They conquered the inhabitants of those two counties in battle, killing above thirty of their chief men, and a considerable number of the commoner sort, and afterwards returned to their ships with great booty§.

At the same time, king Edward had information that Godwin was upon the seas with a fleet, wherefore he fitted out sixty strong ships at Sandwich, all well stored both with men and provisions. The command of this navy was given to Odo and Radulf, two Normans, relations to the king, who was himself so desirous of their taking Godwin, that he was often present with them, and lay on board the ships, the better to encourage the officers to do their duty; yet, notwithstanding all their diligence, Godwin passed the fleet unseen by any of them, and arrived at another part of Kent; from whence he sent speedy messengers into that county, and also to Suffex, Surrey, and Essex, and enticed the principal men of those provinces to take part with him. This news being told to king Edward at Sandwich, he instantly caused his navy to set sail in order to find the earl; but he again passed by them unseen, and the king's ships came up to London, having in vain endeavoured to intercept him. Godwin being informed that the king's fleet was gone to London, set sail for the city.

\* Ingulf.

† Bromton.

‡ S. Dunelm.

§ Malm's.

of Wight, where he was met by the fleet under the conduct of his two sons, who, after their conquest upon the banks of the Severn, had coasted round to the isle of Wight.

Godwin goes to  
London,

Godwin being joined by his sons, the united fleet failed round the coasts towards London, and, by the way, they encreased both the number of their soldiers and navy. The king, who still lay at London, was exceedingly disconcerted at this news; however, by the advice of the Normans, who filled the most important places at his court, he determined to wait the approach of his enemies. When Godwin reached London, and both parties seemed to be prepared for battle, the matter was mitigated by the means of the nobility, and the people, on either side, being chiefly English, refused to fight with each other, so that a peace was set on foot upon these conditions, that Godwin, and his family, should be restored to their former honours; whilst Godwin, on his part, should give hostages to king Edward (which were to be kept in the court of Normandy) for his, and his family's, future loyalty; and that the Normans, who were so great at court, and who had been the occasion of all these disturbances, should be banished the kingdom. Edward at first refused to ratify this agreement, but the Londoners also joining in the outcry against the Normans, he was at last persuaded; and chiefly by the council of Stigand, bishop of Winchester, to give his consent; so that Godwin, and his whole family (Sweyne excepted, who repenting of his misdeeds, but in chief of the murder of Beorn, his cousin, was, at this time, on a pilgrimage towards the Holy Land, from whence he never returned \*) were restored to their governments, and Edgitha, the queen, was recalled from her retirement, once more to share the honours of the court †. Mean while, the Normans made their escape with the greatest secrecy and precipitation, well knowing how obnoxious they were to the people in general, by whom they feared to be torn in pieces if they should have been so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.

A.D. 1053.

The brother of  
Griffith taken.

The following year, Rhese, brother to Griffith, prince of South Wales, who, by his frequent inroads into the borders of the English dominions, had done considerable damage, was taken by the English at Bulundun, and being put to death by the command of king Edward his head was brought to him at Gloucester, where he then lay †.

Death of Godwin.

Godwin did not long survive his re-advancement to his former honours and dignities, for the year after, A. D. 1053, he expired, being seized in a fit as he was sitting at meat with the king at his palace of

\* Malmfb. l. 2. cap. 13.

† Hoveden, Higden, Alured, Beverlier, l. 8. &c.

‡ S. Dunelm.



Odiham. The circumstance of his death, as recorded by several of our best historians, is very extraordinary. They report, that on Easter Monday, whilst he was at table, mention was made to the king of his brother Ælfred, upon which he looked sternly at Godwin, who, when he perceived it, in order to vindicate himself, replied, "At every mention made, my liege, of your brother Ælfred, you frown on me; but may God prevent me from swallowing this morsel if I am guilty of his death." He had scarcely pronounced these words, and put the morsel to his mouth, but he fell down from his seat, and spoke no more. His sons took him up from the ground, and bore him into another room in the palace, hoping that he would recover; but all their endeavours proved in vain, and, on the Thursday following, being the 15th day of April, he died\*. Godwin was succeeded in his honours, and great offices, by Harold his eldest surviving son; besides whom, he left by Githa, his only wife, the daughter of Cnut, four other sons, all possessed of great estates, and considerable offices†.

The power of the Godwin family was lessened for a time, after his decease; for the government of the East Saxons and Angles, which he had possessed, was taken from Harold, and given to Algar, the son of Leofric; but Harold, who was a man well versed in sound policy, seeing the king was childless, formed the design of securing to himself the crown at his decease. He carried himself in that polite and insinuating manner towards Edward, that he soon obtained his good graces, and recovered all the power, which, at Godwin's death, had been lost to the family‡.

Two years after the death of Godwin, Siward, earl of Northumberland, a potent nobleman, and faithful friend of king Edward, died at York, and, upon his decease, Harold obtained the earldom of Northumberland for his brother Tosti. Soon after this, having procured, by false accusation, the banishment of Algar, earl of the East Saxons and East Angles, he obtained the government of those provinces for himself§; by this means near two-thirds of all England came under the dominion of his family.

Algar, in the mean time, highly discontented with his disgrace, fled into Ireland, from whence he soon after returned, bringing a body of forces with him, and being joined by Griffith, prince of Wales, who is said to have married his daughter Edgiva, he entered England, and having overcome Radulf, a Norman, (son to the king's sister Goda, by her first husband) to whom the conduct of the army had been committed, they entered Hereford, and burnt the city; but Harold, with an additional force, going against them, a treaty

Harold succeeds his father.

The death of Siward, and advancement of Tosti.

Algar restored to his earldom.

\* Malmf. ib. Ingulf, Alured Ravelin, † Ingulf.  
Alured Beverlier, &c. § Ibid. &c. &c.

† Chron. Sax. p. 168.

was at last entered upon, and Algar, having an opportunity of clearing his innocence with king Edward, was by him pardoned for the hostilities he had committed, and restored to the possession of his government, which he held until the death of his father Leofric.

A. D. 1057. All this time, Edward was far from being ignorant of the ambitious views of Harold, although he could not easily think upon the means of prevention; and finding himself grow aged and infirm, he was doubtful with himself whom he should nominate for his successor that might be able to dispute the crown with Harold, who was daily strengthening his parties. However, he at last resolved to call into the kingdom his nephew Edward, the son of Edmund Ironsides, his half brother, whose just title to the throne none could dispute. Accordingly, he dispatched Aldred, bishop of Worcester, to the court of Hungary, in order to conduct that prince and his family into England. Edward arrived in England in the year 1057, being then about forty years of age; but he died within a few days after he reached London, and left behind him only one son Eadgar Ætheling, who was both too young and inactive to succeed his uncle. Edward had also two daughters, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Christiana, who became a nun\*. The ambitious Harold, who had been alarmed at the arrival of prince Edward, was not a little pleased at his death, and also at the unpromising genius of his son\*.

The death of  
Leofric, earl of  
Mercia.

The same year, on the third day of August, Leofric, earl of Mercia, deceased; a great and powerful nobleman, justly celebrated for his probity and justice. His irreproachable conduct gained him the esteem of the people whom he governed, and by whom he was greatly lamented. This nobleman, and Siward, earl of Northumberland, by their great power and influence, were the balances that prevented Godwin's family from rising to too great a height; but, upon their decease, Harold became still more potent, and took every opportunity of increasing his greatness. Leofric was succeeded in his earldom of Mercia by Algar his son †.

A. D. 1059. Algar, however, was not permitted to hold his earldom in quiet; for the year after his father's death, A. D. 1058, he was again accused of some misdemeanours, and banished the kingdom; but being a man of great spirit and resolution, and assisted by Griffith and a fleet of Norwegians, he once more recovered his possessions, in spite of all the opposition that was made against him; but he did not long enjoy the fruits of his labour; for the following year, 1059, he died, leaving behind him two sons, Edwin and Morcar, the eldest of which succeeded him in the earldom of Mercia ‡.

The expulsion  
of Algar.

\* Malmf. lib. 2. cap. 15.

† S. Dunelm.

‡ Ibid.  
About

About this time, according to the general tenor of the ancient A. D. 1060. historians, Harold went to Normandy, commissioned, as some have reported, by king Edward, to inform duke William that he had appointed him his heir. But, indeed, the more likely account of this transaction is, that he went thither in order to redeem his brother Ulnoth, and his nephew Haquin, who had been placed in the Norman court by king Edward, they being the hostages which were given to the king upon the late reconciliation between Godwin and him \*. Harold, it seems, had often importuned the king to release these pledges; and, at last, obtained leave of him to make a voyage into Normandy in order to redeem them. Accordingly, attended by a great train, he sailed with two ships, from Boreham in Suffex, and, after meeting with several misfortunes, at last reached the court of Normandy, and made known his errand to the duke. William, on the other hand, well knowing the great power of Harold, made him fair promises, and valuable presents; but, at the same time, insisted upon his taking oath, that, upon the death of Edward, he would be assisting in the raising him to the throne of England. Harold, finding that he was now entirely in the power of his rival, readily agreed to whatever was demanded of him; and William, the more firmly to engage him in his interest, promised him his own daughter in marriage as soon as she came of age, (she being at that time too young;) and gave him up the youngest of the two hostages, promising to send the other after him. However, Harold was no sooner returned to England, than he totally disregarded all the oaths and promises he had made to William, and redoubled his assiduity to secure the crown of England to himself †.

Harold's journey to Normandy.

In the year 1064, Harold raised his reputation to the highest degree by the victories he obtained over the Welsh, who, under Griffith, their prince, had made continual inroads on the borders of England, and done great damage. Though Harold had, upon some former occasions, defeated and driven them back, yet they were constantly making head again, and renewing their attacks; therefore, this year, in conjunction with his brother Tofti, earl of Northumberland, he invaded Wales, both by sea and land; and this expedition was so well planned, and conducted with such spirit, that the Welsh, fearing their nation would be exterminated, seized upon their brave conductor Griffith, and after they had cut off his head, sent it to Harold as a mark of their entire submission. Harold having thus fortunately obtained a compleat conquest, returned back not a little heightened in the esteem

The Welsh subdued.

\* S. Dunelm.

† It must be owned that even this account of this strange transaction is far from being satisfactory. "In which," (says a modern author) "there seems to be some

secret which none of our historians have penetrated." The readers will find it variously accounted for in the ancient chronicles of Ingulf, Malms. Hoveden, Bromton, H. Hunt, and R. Higden, &c.

of the English people; and Edward appointed two brothers, Bléthyn and Rheywallon, to rule over the Welsh, instead of Griffith, whom they had slain\*.

A.D. 1064. Tofti was very serviceable in the above expedition, and had also manifested his valour on other occasions; yet he was a man of violent passions, and guilty of many flagrant acts of cruelty and oppression in his government. He loaded the people with excessive taxes; he seized upon the estates of many, and put the owners, with their families, to death, in order to secure them to himself †. In short, such was his tyrannical oppression that the Northumbrians could no longer endure him, especially as their grievances were daily increasing. They, therefore, had recourse to arms, and, in their fury, slew several of his officers, the ministers of his tyranny, seized upon his treasures, drove him out of their country ‡, and chose Morcar, the son of Algar, duke of Mercia, for their earl.

Tofti driven from his earldom.

Tofti complains to the king, & the event,

Tofti, after his expulsion, hastened to the king, where he made a heavy complaint against the Northumbrians, which being listened to by Edward, Harold was dispatched, with a powerful army, to punish the Northumbrians, and restore his brother to his earldom. When Harold approached the borders of Northumberland, he was met by certain deputies from the discontented people of that country, who informed him of the cruelties of their late earl; and also represented firmly to him, that they were a free people, both by their birth and education; and, therefore, could not bear the tyranny and inhumanity of their governors; that they had learned of their ancestors either to maintain their liberties, or die in their defence—but should be very quiet and obedient under a mild and just superior. Harold, finding that they had but too just grounds for their complaint, left his brother to shift for himself; and persuaded the king to pardon the Northumbrians, and confirm Morcar in his earldom; upon which, Tofti, full of anger and discontent, retired to Flanders §.

A.D. 1065. The removal of Tofti from that important government was by no means detrimental to the views of Harold; for, though he was his brother, yet he was not a man whom he could trust, but one much more likely to prove his rival than his friend; it was, therefore, more advantageous to him to place one in that post who was beloved by the people themselves, and, by that means, he obliged both the governor and the people, and secured their interest. This he was well aware of, and, in order to lay the foundation of his future advancement more firmly, he married the sister of Edwin and Morcar; so that, by

Tofti's banishment no hurt to Harold.

\* S. Dunelm, Ingulf, Malmf. H. Hunt. lib. 6.

† Bromton.

‡ Malmf. l. 2. c. 13. H. Hunt. l. 6, &c.  
§ Id. ibid & Knyghton.

this prudent step he entirely gained the hearts of those two noblemen, and with them all the people of Northumberland and Mercia, to his assistance\*.

Whilst Harold was thus at the height of his power, it was evident A. D. 1066. to every one that he would succeed king Edward, who growing daily more and more infirm, deceased on Thursday the fifth of January, in the year 1066, which being the eve of the Epiphany, his corpse was solemnly entered the following day in the new church at Westminster, in the presence of all the members of a great council which Edward had summoned to attend the dedication of that church †.

Edward was of a ruddy complexion, of a graceful stature, and handsome in his person, which was much improved by rich habits; those, however, he never affected. He was a weak prince, easy to be prevailed upon by those about him; so that he is justly said to have had no passions or repentments of his own; but constantly adopted those of his ministers. His manners were simple, inoffensive, and unaffected. He was scrupulously chaste and devout, neglecting all amusements but hawking, in which he greatly delighted. He was sparing in his diet, and an utter enemy to luxury and voluptuousness, yet he was kind and bountiful to all about him, whether foreigners or natives. He was not either proud or avaricious, but a great lover of justice, and an enemy of oppression. In short, he was a timorous, well designing man, without any one of those qualities that are necessary to make a great monarch. His exterior piety and holiness, and the particular favour he manifested towards the monks and clergy in general, obtained him the names of Saint and Confessor.

His wife was Edgitha, the daughter of earl Godwin, from whose bed he is said to have abstained out of principles of mistaken piety; but it is far more likely that the dislike he bore to her father might also extend to her. She survived him eight years, dying A. D. 1074, the eighth year of the reign of William the Conqueror, declaring herself an unspotted virgin, and was buried beside her husband in the new church at Westminster.

\* Vide Carte's General Hist. p. 355. sup. Hen. Hunt. Hoveden, Ingulf, &c.  
† Chron. Sax. p. 171. W. Malmib. ut

## H A R O L D   T H E   S E C O N D ,

*The seventeenth Monarch of the HEPTARCHY.*

Harold claims  
the crown.

THE throne, now vacant by the death of king Edward, was quickly filled by Harold, without the least opposition, as if his title had been as clear as it was defective: he declared, indeed, that his predecessor had named him for his successor, but of this he could never produce sufficient evidence. The truth seems to be, that Harold owed his advancement to the throne chiefly to his own great power, wealth and popularity, and the strong connections he had made with the chief nobility. To this may certainly be added, the love which the citizens of London bore towards him, and the general favour of the clergy. In short, he seems to have been so well received by the nobles, the clergy, and the people in general, that, although Eadgar Atheling, the unquestionable heir to the crown, was present, yet his name was scarcely mentioned, nor the least offer made of opposing him to Harold\*.

The coronation  
of Harold.

Harold was crowned at London, on the 6th of January, 1066, the very day that king Edward, his predecessor, was buried. The ceremony of his coronation was performed in the cathedral church of Saint Paul, by Aldred, archbishop of York †.

Harold's prudent govern-  
ment.

Harold, thus seated upon the throne, endeavoured, by all mildness and justice, to secure the affection of the people, repealing bad laws, and imposing such as best suited the constitution. He patronized the clergy, and was affable and gracious to all his subjects ‡. He readily foresaw that his reign would be disturbed, and his claim disputed; his earliest care, therefore, was to provide a fleet and an army to defend himself. The friendless and neglected Eadgar, at home, he had no fear of; but his enraged brother, who had taken refuge in Flanders, and William duke of Normandy, to whom he had sworn to be assisting

\* Malmbury.

† Ibid.

‡ Alured Beverl. lib. 8.---Malmbury,  
lib. 2. cap. 13.

in placing him upon the throne which he himself had usurped, were dangerous enemies.

Harold had not long been crowned, before messengers came from Normandy, who, in the name of the duke their master, demanded the crown of him, which he had unjustly seized upon, notwithstanding the oath he had made to the duke. To this peremptory demand, Harold boldly answered, that the oath he had taken was forced from him, and not made by his own free consent, and for that reason could not be binding; and that he was fully determined to defend the throne to which he had been raised by the united consent of the nobility, the clergy, and the people.—The ambassadors returning with this answer to William, he made instant preparation for the invasion of England\*.

The duke of Normandy demands the crown of Harold.

In the mean time, Tofti, in Flanders, hearing of his brother's advancement, and burning with rage and envy, went instantly to Roan, in order to persuade William to invade England. William, who wanted no incitement to the attempt, was then preparing for it with the greatest vigour. Tofti was well received in Normandy by the Duke, who encouraged him to harrafs the coasts of England, whilst he himself completed the preparations he was making against Harold. —Tofti then sent messengers into Denmark and Norway, to supplicate assistance; mean while he himself, spurred on with the hopes of revenge, set sail with sixty ships from Flanders. The first place he landed at was the Isle of Wight, where he took some spoils; after which, in his way coasting round towards Lincolnshire, he made several unsuccessful attacks, and was at last defeated by Edwin and Morca, and, to add to his misfortunes, he was deserted by many of his assistants. This obliged him to retire into Scotland, where he earnestly, but in vain, solicited aid of Malcolm, king of that country. His messengers whom he had sent into Norway were more successful; for, at their intreaty, Harold Harfager, king of Norway, with a fleet of three hundred ships, put to sea, and coming to the mouth of the Tyne, was joined by Tofti, with what forces he had left: they then sailed together up the Humber, and landed in Yorkshire, where, having overcome an army conducted by the earls of Mercia and Northumberland, they took the city of York.—Harold, in the mean time, hearing of their arrival, was upon his march with a powerful army; but, notwithstanding all his speed, he could not come up with them till five days after the above-mentioned unfortunate disaster. Both the armies met on the 25th day of September, near Stanford-bridge, where, after a bloody battle, Harold obtained a complete victory. In this battle fell both Tofti and Har-

Tofti arms against his brother Harold.

\* Malmfb. Ingulf, &c.

fager the king of Norway, and their whole army was almost destroyed. The conquerors obtained much treasure and many valuable spoils, only twenty of the enemies vast fleet being suffered to depart \*.

News of William's arrival brought to Harold.

This important victory delivered Harold from two of his most dangerous enemies. His joy, however, was but of short duration; for few days passed before he received accounts of the landing of William, duke of Normandy, at Pevensey in Suffex, with an army of sixty thousand men. This news surprized him the more, because, as William had so long delayed his coming, he began to flatter himself that he had laid his intended expedition aside. Upon this consideration, the powerful army, and numerous fleet of ships, which had been fitted out during the summer to defend the coasts, were disbanded, and the army permitted to return home: thus the coasts were left open to the invasion of the foe.—William landed on the twenty-fifth day of September, and going to Hastings, built a fort there, where he waited the approach of the enemy †.

The battle of Hastings, and death of Harold

Harold no sooner received information of William's arrival, than he hastened with the utmost expedition to London; which speedy march so much harraffed his army, that many, through discontent, deserted from him. But so eager was he to oppose his enemies, that, when he came to London, he would not wait until the forces from Mercia and Northumberland should join him, nor even to arm the Londoners and take them with him, but, with the army he had already got, marched instantly towards Hastings, where he fought with his enemy, and, after one of the most obstinate and bloody battles, the English were overcome; but not until Harold was himself slain, together with two of his brothers, Leofwin and Girth, and the greater part of the Saxon nobility ‡.

The burial of Harold.

Harold's mother, hearing of her son's unfortunate death, sent messengers to the conqueror, with a considerable sum of money, in order to redeem his body, that it might be decently interred. The messengers were very politely received by William, who refused the money they had brought, and gave them free permission to take the body of the unfortunate king, and bear it to his mother. Befooled with dust and blood, and stripped of its ornaments, it was some time before the body could be discovered from others of the slain, until a woman, named Editha, who had formerly been his concubine, iden-

\* Chron. Sax. W. Malmsh. lib. 2. c. 13. Hoveden, &c.—We may add, that many of the ancient authors take occasion here to censure Harold very severely, affirming that he very unfairly seized upon the treasure to himself, and refused to reward his soldiers, who had so faithfully

served him. This, if true, was a very impolitic step in him, especially considering the situation he was in, owing his support entirely to the army.

† Malmsh. &c.

‡ Ibid.



tified it by some particular marks that she remembered him to have. When his mother received his body, she caused it to be buried at Waltham, within the monastery of Holy Cross, which he himself had founded\*.

Harold was tall and graceful in his person, strong, and capable of enduring great fatigue. Ancient historians are very much divided in the character they have given us of this prince; some of them speak of him with commendation†, whilst others have declared that he was proud, opiniated, cruel, vindictive, lascivious, and avaricious‡. But after all, especially when we consider his actions (as they are recorded) in a fair and impartial light, we shall certainly think that he has been too heavily accused, and that many of the vices of his family are laid upon his shoulders. His unbounded ambition, which led him to usurp the throne, which belonged to another, seems truly to have been his greatest fault§.

Harold was twice married, though the name of his first wife is nowhere recorded. The issue that he had by her seem to have been three sons. The eldest, named Godwin, who was nearly advanced to manhood in the life-time of his father, after whose decease he fled with his brothers into Ireland, from whence he returned some time after, and landing in Somersetshire, slew Ednoth, a nobleman of that country, who opposed him; and afterwards, taking great spoils in Devonshire and Cornwall, went back to Ireland. The next year he came again into England, and fought against Beorn, earl of Cornwall, but with what success is not well known; he went back, however, into Ireland, and from thence sailed into Denmark, to Sweyne his cousin-german, at whose court he spent the rest of his life.—Eadmund, the second son, was the constant companion of his brother in all his expeditions, and went with him to Denmark, where he also finished his days.—Magnus, the third son, was with his brothers at the time they first came into England, and returned with them; but afterwards he is no more mentioned, so that it is supposed he died between the time of the first and second expedition.

The second wife of Harold was Alghitha, the widow of Griffith, king of Wales, and sister to Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumberland. After the decease of her husband, she was conveyed by her brethren to Winchester, where she led a retired life, and died towards the latter end of the reign of the Conqueror.—Wolf appears to have been her only child by king Harold. He is thought to have been brought up by his uncle Morcar, and was living in the reign

Character of Harold.

Wives and issue of Harold.

\* Malmsh. lib. 3.

† Allured Beverl. lib. 8. p. 122.---  
Malmsh. &c.

‡ Bromton, Knyghton, &c.

§ W. Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 13.

of William Rufus, who conferred the honour of knighthood upon him\*.

\* Copgrave gives Harold a daughter, named Gunhild, who (as he declares) in the life of St. Wulfstan, was a nun in one of the monasteries of England; but we are not informed by which wife she was.--- Another daughter, but supposed to have been illegitimate, is attributed to king Harold (mentioned in the Danish histories) who is said to have been brought up and married in Denmark. Sax. Grammat. &c.

END OF THE FIRST PART OF THE CHRONICLE.

# C H R O N I C L E

## O F

# E N G L A N D.

### P A R T II.

*The Ecclesiastical History of the Saxons, from the Accession of Egbert to the  
Arrival of William Duke of Normandy, A. D. 1066.*

**A**THELARD, who about the year 976, succeeded Lambertius Cent. IX.  
in the archbishopric of Canterbury, was exceedingly discontented  
at the division that had been made in his see some time before by Mercia restor-  
ed to the arch-  
bishopric of  
Canterbury.  
Offa king of the Mercians, who had made all Mercia independent of  
the see of Canterbury, and, with the connivance of pope Adrian,  
erected an archbishopric within his own territories at Litchfield. Offa  
died in the year 796, and was succeeded by his son Egbert, who also  
died within the course of the same year, and left the Mercian crown  
to Cenelm Adulf, at that time possessing the new archbishopric of  
Litchfield. Cenelm, in the year 796, conquered the kingdom of  
Kent; and Athelard so far prevailed upon that prince, that notwith-  
standing Adulf was yet alive, he gave his consent for reuniting the  
two sees, by restoring Mercia once more subject to the province of  
Canterbury. This decree of the king was some time after confirmed  
by the pope; for in the year 801, Athelard, who had been indefati-  
gable in the cause, made a journey to Rome for that purpose. The  
consent of the pope was easily obtained, and the letter that Cenelm  
sent by the prelate to him, with a present of 120 mancusses, pleased  
him so much, that he returned answers to those letters filled with flat-  
teries to the king himself, whom he calls his most dear, most excel-  
lent, and most sweet son. In these letters he was also lavish in the  
praises of the archbishop, whose piety he extols so highly that he scrup-  
ples

Cent. IX. ples not to declare, that he was able to rescue all the souls of his province from the bottom of hell, and send them to heaven \*.

Decrees of the  
pope approved  
of.

Athelard, after his return from Rome, summoned a provincial council at Cloweshoe in the year 803, where the suffragan bishops being met, the decree of the pope for the restoration of Mercia to the see of Canterbury was laid before them, and approved of, and nothing less than damnation denounced against any prince that should, from that time forth, attempt to infringe the privileges of the archbishops, or see of Canterbury †. Athelard, at the same time, laid before them another decree of the pope, forbidding the monastics to chuse secular persons for their governors, which was also confirmed and subscribed to by himself, and his twelve suffragan bishops, nineteen abbots, thirty-eight presbyters, one archdeacon, and two deacons. This last decree added not a little to the wealth of the church, because it had been formerly very customary for noblemen to have the government of monasteries, and ladies of the nunneries, which were now put entirely into the hands of the ecclesiastics. In the mean time, though the whole archiepiscopal power reverted into the hands of Athelard, yet Adulf was permitted to enjoy the empty honour of the pall during his life time ‡.

The council of  
Cealehythe.

Athelard did not long enjoy the honours which he had laboured to restore to his see, for dying about the year 807, he was succeeded by Wulfred, who had been a monk in Christ's church at Canterbury. This prelate convened a council, which met at Cealehythe on the twenty-seventh day of July, A. D. 816. Cenelm, king of Mercia, with the nobility and great officers of the realm, were also present on this occasion. The canons established in this council were eleven in number, and serve to throw great light upon the affairs of the Saxon church at this period.

Canons of Wul-  
fred.

The first decrees, that the catholic faith, and ancient canons, be duly kept.

The second, that new parochial churches be consecrated by the bishop of the diocese wherein they are built with holy water, and consecration of the eucharist; and that the picture of the saint, to whom it is dedicated, should be painted upon the wall, or board, or else upon the altar.

The third, that Christian charity and love be preserved.

The fourth confirms to the bishop, not only episcopal authority over all the monasteries and nunneries within the diocese, but full power to appoint the abbots and abbesses with the consent of the members of the societies.

\* Spelman. Concil. T. 1. p. 322.

† Ibid. p. 324.

‡ Baron Annal. An. 796. N. 33.

The fifth exempts the Scotch clergy from exercising their offices in Cent. IX. England; and the reason assigned is, that it is not known by whom such clergy were ordained.

The sixth confirms such acts of the preceding councils, as were signed with the cross.

The seventh forbids the bishops or abbots to alienate their lands for more than one life, except it be to preserve themselves from famine, from slavery, or from the depredations of the enemy.

The eighth requires that such monasteries as had been once dedicated by consent of the bishops, and wherein any monastic rule had been received, and the abbot or abbess had received benediction from the bishop, should remain monasteries unalienable, and never more be esteemed the property of secular persons, nor inhabited by them.

The ninth obliges every bishop to take a copy of the canons properly signed, witnessed and dated.

The tenth directs the funeral and offices for a departed bishop, and requires that a full tenth of his estates should be given to the poor; that all his English slaves should be set at liberty, and that all honour may be done to his memory with giving praises to God; that upon tolling of the bell, at the several parish churches, the people should repair to the church, and sing thirty psalms for the soul of the deceased; that every bishop and abbot should cause six hundred psalms to be sung, and one hundred and twenty masses to be celebrated, and set three slaves at liberty, giving each of them three shillings; that all the servants of God should fast one day; and that for thirty days, immediately after divine service in every church, seven belts of pater-nosters should be sung for him\*; and, finally, at the end of the thirty days, their obit was to be celebrated in such manner as they usually observed on the festivals of their saints.

The eleventh required, that bishops should not invade the dioceses of each other in ordaining of priests and deacons, or the consecration of churches, excepting the archbishop; that the presbyters should not assume greater power to themselves than was allowed them by the bishop, nor intermeddle within the district of each other, unless in cases of necessity, in administering baptism, or visiting the sick; and that in administering baptism, the child should be dipped into the water, and not sprinkled.

Several other councils were held under this primate, in which no very material business was done relative to the general laws and regulation of the affairs of the church. Wulfred died in the year 830, and was succeeded by Theogildus, abbot of Christ's Church, who

The end of the  
Heptarchy, and  
the consequen-  
ces that follow-  
ed.

\* These belts or girdles (says Dr. Henry) had studs for numbering the pater-nosters, as the rosaries, or strings of beads do at present.

Cent. IX. dying in about three months after his predecessor, left the chair to Celnoth, deacon of the same church, who was chosen his successor, and, during whose time, Egbert established the sole monarchy upon the ruins of the Heptarchy. By the whole kingdom being in the hands of one monarch, the clergy were delivered from many inconveniencies which had frequently happened to them while they were subject to different and contending princes. But they did not long enjoy the happy change without molestations; for the dreadful calamities occasioned by the Danes in the succeeding periods, overbalanced the advantages, and involved them frequently in almost insupportable calamities. The monasteries, in general, being found by the Danes to be more opulent and better stored with booty than other places, was one great reason that they constantly fell a prey to that people whenever they stood in their way; nor were they content with only plundering the religious houses, for being pagans, and bearing a great hatred to the Christian religion, the miserable monks were generally butchered by the merciless conquerors—or, at least, the mildest fate they could expect was to be treated with every degree of insolence and cruelty, and at last sold for slaves. These alarming calamities made a prodigious number of the monks abandon their profession, many of them becoming soldiers, or following other methods of life which seemed to expose them to less danger than that they fled from; and such as still continued constant in their profession, after the destruction of their monasteries, retired to the villages and towns, where they might more securely discharge the offices of their holy functions, and this dispersion of the clergy necessarily produced a great change in their manners and way of life; for they had no longer objections to a married state, which, whilst many of them lived together, would have been productive of endless inconveniencies. They now, therefore, entered into a state of marriage as the most comfortable and most convenient to their present circumstances\*; and this change in the way of life amongst the clergy became so general, that before the end of the present century there were but few monasteries or monks, and scarcely an unmarried priest in all England. During these disastrous times, we cannot expect to meet with many councils for making fresh laws, or regulating the affairs of the church.

After the death of Egbert, which happened in the year 840, his eldest surviving son, Æthelwulf, succeeded him in the government of the kingdom. This prince, who had been educated and designed for the church, still continued to have a great respect for the clergy, even after he ascended the throne. He therefore conferred many favours upon them, the chief of which was the grant of the tenth of all the crown lands. In the seventh and eighth centuries,

Æthelwulf a benefactor to the clergy.

\* Inett's Hist. English Church, chap. 17.

the English clergy had been supported by the produce of the lands which had been given to the church by kings, and other great men—by a tax of one Saxon penny on every house (which tax was called Church Scot)—and by the voluntary gifts of religious people. In the times of peace and tranquillity, their funds supplied them plentifully; but in the disastrous periods that followed, when the taxes were not duly paid, when their residences were destroyed, and the slaves, who tilled their ground, made prisoners, they were soon reduced to poverty and distress, which caused Æthelwulf, a man of great piety, to give them a more certain resource for their subsistence; and it was with this view, that, in the year 844, he convened an assembly of the clergy and nobility at Winchester, and, with the consent of the latter, made them the grant above-mentioned, of the tenth part of all the lands belonging to the crown, free of all taxes whatever, even the three material obligations, of building and fortifying castles—repairing bridges, and attending upon any military expeditions\*. In return for this bounty, the clergy were to do some additional duties, as every Wednesday to sing fifty psalms in the church, and celebrate two masses, one for the king himself, and the other for the nobility, to whom they were indebted for their consenting to the grant\*.

Æthelwulf, after his return from Rome, extended the grant he had formerly made to the clergy, to all the kingdoms that now composed the English monarchy; which was done in a great assembly at Winchester in the year 855, at which was present, besides the king himself, Burhed, the tributary king of Mercia; Eadmund, the tributary king of the East Angles; the two archbishops of Canterbury and York, with all the other bishops, clergy, nobles, and great men of the whole kingdom †.

During the three succeeding reigns of the three sons of Æthelwulf, nothing material concerning the ecclesiastical affairs can possibly be collected; for such was the misery and confusion of that time, that no attention could be paid to them; nor, indeed, for the first seven years of Ælfred's reign, who succeeded his brothers, for they passed in the same calamitous manner. Those few remaining monasteries which had escaped the former invasions of the Danes, were now destroyed, and the miserable inhabitants either put to the sword, or buried in the ruins of their own habitations. But, after the important victory gained over the Danes by Ælfred the Great, in the year 878, some stop was put to the outrages of that savage people. Godrun, the Danish leader, became a Christian, and was baptized soon after, king Ælfred himself being sponsor for him. His example was followed by thirty of the chief noblemen in the Danish army, who were thereupon received into favour by Ælfred, and, in consequence of their having

Æthelwulf extends his grant.

The Danes embrace Christianity.

\* Anglia Sacra, T. 1. p. 200.

† Spelman. Concil. T. 1. p. 348.

Cent. IX. renounced paganism, the kingdom of the East Angles was given to them, and Godrun became their king, holding that dominion under Ælfred\*. The ecclesiastical laws which Ælfred composed at the time of the agreement between himself and Godrun, are yet remaining. The first article ordains, that the Danes should renounce paganism, and agree in the worship of the true God. Those who would not obey were commanded to quit the kingdom, which some few did, but the greater part remained behind, and followed the example of their king and the chief noblemen. The second law imposes a very heavy fine upon all such as should apostatize from Christianity, and relapse into paganism. The three following give rules for the conduct of the clergy. The ninth commands the payment of tythes; and those that follow provide for the regular keeping of the fasts and festivals of the church, and particularly the religious observance of the Lord's Day. The laws are seventeen in number; and, in short, there is none of them but what respect the interest of religion, the conduct of the clergy, or the prohibition of vices to which the Danes were most accustomed †.

Ælfred's laws  
for his own  
subjects.

These laws of Ælfred were such as regarded chiefly the Danes and the Saxons amongst whom they lived. But besides these, that great prince had another code of laws for his own subjects, some few of which related to the church. It is remarkable, that these laws are preceded by the Ten Commandments, in which the second is omitted; but that the number might be compleat after the ninth, the following short one is subjoined—"Make not thou gods of gold or of silver;" and this omission of the second commandment seems to be a plain proof that images, at this time, were become the objects of worship. About this period also, as appears from some of the above laws, the clergy, in order to add a mysterious solemnity to the celebration of the mass, during the time of Lent, caused a curtain to be placed before the altar whilst they performed that office; but the people being thus excluded from seeing what was passing, were apt to be lifting up, or tearing it aside, which is there forbidden under pain of a heavy penalty. Another of these laws gives servants, notslaves, the privilege of working for themselves two and forty days during the year ‡.

Monasteries re-  
stored by king  
Ælfred.

As soon as king Ælfred had secured the peace of his subjects, he began to repair the churches and monasteries that had been destroyed, and even to build new ones; but so dreadfully was the ideas of a monkish life impressed upon the minds of the clergy in general, owing to the aggravated stories that were told of their late miseries, that it was a long time before they could be prevailed upon to return to it; so that Ælfred was obliged to send for monks from France, and other countries, to inhabit those places he had first repaired §; but, in the

\* Chron. Sax. & Asserii Annal.

† Spelm. Concil. Brit. T. 1. p. 375.

‡ Concil. Brit. v. 1. p. 371, &c.  
§ Asserii Vit. Ælfredi.

end,



end, when the Saxon clergy saw that peace was established upon a certain foundation, they, by degrees, returned to the monasteries they had left, and a prodigious number of them having married during their retreat, brought their wives and children with them, so that almost all the monasteries and abbeys were filled with a kind of secular or married monks, which was the lamentable occasion of many dreadful commotions in the succeeding times. Cent. IX.

From the general decay of learning that prevailed during the tenth century, it was reproachfully called the Leaden Age. Dark ignorance and superstition were spread over almost all the western church, and that the same should prevail in England at this period is not at all surprising, if we consider what must be the consequence of the calamities and confusion that were occasioned by the frequent revolts of the Danes who were settled in England, and the constant invasion of their countrymen from abroad; for in times so wretched as these, how could the interests of learning or religion be attended to!

For this reason, perhaps, Edward the Elder, who succeeded his father in the year 900, might suffer certain bishoprics to lie vacant for a while, which gave birth, in after ages, to a formal story of an interdict said to have been laid upon the land by pope Formosus, by which Edward and all his subjects were excommunicated until the vacant sees were filled up; but the whole of the story seems to have been the invention of the monks of the latter times, or at least made formidable by them by being misrepresented; for if there ever was the least ground for this report, it seems only to have arisen from some admonitions which it is probable Edward might have received from the court of Rome; but considering the story in its full extent, its absurdity is abundantly evident, because pope Formosus was in his grave at least four years before the accession of Edward to the throne, and near eight before the time assigned for the pretended interdict\*.

It is however certain that king Edward, as soon as the public troubles were subsided, filled up all the sees that were vacant, and erected three new ones within the kingdom of Wesssex, one at Kirton in Devonshire, another at Padstow in Cornwall, and a third at Wells in Somersetshire; and the same year, 809, Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated no less than seven bishops in one day, namely, Fridstan of Winchester, Weretan of Sherborn, Cenulf of Dorchester, Eadulf of Kirton, Æthelstan of Padstow, Beornoc of Selsey, and Athelm of Wells †.

\* Inett's Church History, chap. 18, and Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 184.

† Anglia Sacra, p. 555.

## Cent. X.

The Danes in the East Angles revolt.

The Danes who inhabited the East Angles, and who had adhered to the Christian religion during the reign of king Ælfred, after his death, not only rebelled against king Edward his successor, but also apostatized from their faith, and again embraced their idolatrous doctrines; but in the year 921, Edward reduced them to obedience, obliged them to renounce paganism, and return to the Christian faith, and the observance of those laws which his father had prescribed for them\*.

Councils called of Æthelstan.

From this period to the year 928, we hear but little of the ecclesiastical affairs, at which time Æthelstan sat upon the throne; and though his reign was almost one continual scene of war and confusion, yet he neglected not the examples of his grandfather and father, who had carefully provided for the defence of the church as well as of the state; and though the dates and results of most of the councils he held, except that of Gratanlea, are not recorded, it is certain that he held at least four others of the same kind at the following places, namely, Exeter, Feverham, Thunderfield and London †.

Council of Gratanlea.

By the remaining laws that were established at Gratanlea, some judgment may be formed of what we had to expect, if the proceedings of the other councils had been preserved. This council, which was held in the year 928, is one of the mix'd councils wherein the nobility, as well as clergy, were present, and the laws themselves consist of civil and ecclesiastical matters blended together. Wulhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, presided at this synod; and besides him and the bishops, the king himself, and many of the nobles and wise men, who had been summoned by the king, were present ‡.

Canons established at the council of Gratanlea.

The first canon commands the payment of tythes on all the king's own lands; and also commands every alderman and bishop to pay tythes of their lands, both of the cattle and corn; and that this should be declared as the law of England by those who had authority to do so.

The second commands the continuation of payment of the church scot where it was due; so that it appears, even after the grant of tythes to the clergy by king Æthelwulf, they did not relinquish any of their former revenues.

The third law enjoins the officers of the crown to make provision for the poor from the king's own estate; that is, every one of his reeves was to maintain a poor Englishman from every two of his farms, by the bounty of one amber of meal, one hog, a ram, with four-pence every month and a mantle, or, instead of it, thirty-pence annually for his cloathing; and all this was to be done for the forgiveness of the king's sins, and the salvation of his soul.

The fourth directs the punishment of sabbath-breakers.

The fifth denounces severe penalties against sorcery and witchcraft.

\* Spec. Concil. p. 390.

† Ibid. p. 407.

‡ Ibid. t. i. p. 401.  
The

The sixth contains some regulation relative to the coinage of money. Cent. X.

The seventh and the eighth treat on the manner and circumstances of the ordeals, or trials by fire or water.

The ninth decrees, that no fairs, markets, or courts of judicature, should be held upon the Lord's day.

The tenth prescribes the punishment for perjury.

The eleventh law is a sort of charge to the bishops and clergy, relative to the discharge of their respective duties, those especially which respected the peace and welfare of the subject, and served to establish justice amongst the people in general; and herein, according to the ancient Saxon usage, the bishops were commanded to be personally present at all the courts of judicature within their diocese, to over-see and direct the conduct of the judges; they were also to visit their people, and instruct them; and to them also the charge of surveying the standards for weights and measures was committed.

The twelfth canon decrees that fifty psalms should be sung every Friday morning, in every monastery and cathedral church, for the king and his people.

The thirteenth ascertains the fines chargeable on offenders in case of blood\*.

Wulfhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, died in the year 234, and Life of Odo. was succeeded by Odo, bishop of Sherborn.—The history of this prelate is not a little extraordinary. He was the son of a very wealthy Dane who was settled in the kingdom of the East Angles, but was turned out of doors by his parents, who were bigotted Pagans, for his constant attendance upon the Christian church: in this condition he was taken notice of by Athelm, a Saxon nobleman of the first rank, who, being pleased with his genius and good parts, entertained him in his house, and bestowed a liberal education upon him, which he as carefully improved. Soon after, by the interest of Athelm, he was put into holy orders, and, by the dint of his merit, was speedily promoted from one step to another, until he was created bishop of Sherborn. He was not only a learned ecclesiastic, but also, being of a martial spirit, he followed his sovereign, king Æthelstan, in his wars, and was present with him at the famous battle of Brannanburgh, where his assistance contributed not a little to the attainment of the victory. Upon the decease of Wulfhelm, Odo was chosen to succeed him in the archbishopric of Canterbury; but, according to the declarations of the monks in after times, he refused at first, because he was not a monk†, but being over-persuaded, he at last accepted of the honour that was offered him.—Odo was a wise and active prelate, and a man

\* Spel. Concil, T. 1. p. 402.

† This tale is justly suspected to have been added by the Monks, who neglected

no opportunities of giving consequence to their own profession.

Cent. X. of great spirit: his zeal, which was fervent in the cause of religion, seems to have been very sincere, although he frequently carried matters with a very high hand, as is evident not only from his actions, but from his pastoral letter to the clergy and people of his province\*, which was published A. D. 943. He speaks in a tone of vast authority, commanding that none should tax the clergy, whom he calls the sons of God, and declaring that all such as disobeyed the orders of the church were still more hardened in their wickedness than the soldiers that crucified Christ. He also lays his strict command upon the king, and princes under him, to obey with great humility the orders of the archbishops and bishops, declaring that to their keeping the keys of the kingdom of heaven were committed.

Canons of Wulfhelm.

Besides the above-mentioned constitutions, which were published by the authority of Odo alone, there are several canons that were made in a great council of the clergy and nobility, convened in the reign of king Eadmund at London, A. D. 944, in which that archbishop presided†.—These canons, which are six in number, are chiefly as follow:

The first requires that all the clergy should set a good example to the laity, by the purity of their manners, and the justness and devoutness of their lives; and declares, that all such as broke this canon should forfeit all their goods, and be deemed unworthy of Christian burial.

The second commands the payment of tythes, church scot, and other taxes due to the church, on pain of excommunication.

The third required, that such persons as had been guilty of murder should give satisfaction to the bishop of the diocese for the offence done to the church, before they should presume to come into the presence of the king.

The fourth pronounced, that the pollution of a nun was equal to adultery; accordingly the same penalty was to be inflicted, and the offender was declared to be unworthy of Christian burial.

The fifth commanded all the bishops to repair and ornament all the churches in their own demesne lands, and also to admonish the king to do the same to those that belonged to him.

By the last canon, those who forswore themselves, together with those who offered sacrifices to false gods, should be excommunicated.

Besides these six canons, there was a law made in the reign of king Eadmund, directing the manner of espousals and solemnities of marriage.

Somewhere about this period, the Ecclesiastical Synod is supposed to have been held at York, in which the clergy were subjected to several very heavy fines, for various offences, and particularly the established

\* Commonly called the Constitutions of Odo.

† Concil. Brit. T. 1, pag. 419.



canons; and, in order to secure the payment of these fines, every clergyman was obliged, at his admission into holy orders, to procure twelve creditable bondsmen. As the kingdom of Northumberland was chiefly inhabited by the Danes, the fines were all to be paid in the Danish oras, or ounces of silver, and are as follows: If a priest celebrate mass in an unhallowed house, let him pay twelve oras; the like penalty was fixed for performing the same upon an unhallowed altar; the same also if he consecrated the sacramental wine in a wooden chalice, or celebrated the mass without wine. All these fines, which were very heavy, when the scarcity of silver is considered, were to be paid to the bishop of the diocese wherein such offence had been committed\*.

In the year 941 Dunstan was recalled to court by king Eadmund, and made abbot of Glastonbury. This extraordinary person seems to have been descended from a noble family in Wessex, and was educated at Glastonbury, where the swift progress he made in every kind of learning, soon recommended him to the notice of the higher clergy, so that, in his very early age, he was introduced by Athelm, his uncle, then archbishop of Canterbury, to king Æthelstan, into whose favour he so ingratiated himself, that he was retained in the court of that prince, by whom he was frequently employed in affairs of consequence. Dunstan's talent for music also contributed not a little to the obtaining the favour of Æthelstan, whom he often amused with playing upon the harp, and other musical instruments. In order to raise himself still higher in the esteem of the prince and his courtiers, he not only pretended to great sanctity, but now and then performed some miracle, which gained him great admiration. However, these wonderful performances soon excited the envy of others, who had not cunning enough to delude the people in the same manner, and they persuaded the king, that all these miracles were performed by the assistance of the devil, and that Dunstan, instead of being a saint, was a wicked magician. This unfavourable insinuation against Dunstan soon gained ground in the mind of Æthelstan, who, therefore, banished him from the court, and he retired to a cell at Glastonbury †, from whence he was recalled by Eadmund, as we have mentioned above.

After a reign of five years, Eadmund died, and was succeeded by his brother Eadred, who ascended the throne, A. D. 946, and following the example of his predecessor, gave great encouragement to the monks, and, at the intercession of Turktil, his chancellor, he granted several privileges to the monastery of Croyland, and constituted him the first abbot thereof. Dunstan, who had stood very high in the favour of Eadmund, was now held in such esteem by Eadred, that he

\* Johnson's Canons.

† Osbornus de Vita S. Dunstani, &c.

**Cent. X.** made him his confessor, his confidant, and, indeed, in a word, his prime minister.

*Dunstan favours the monks.*

During this period, Dunstan employed all his interest in favour of the Benedictine monks, of which order he himself was a member; and as he had all the treasures of Eadred in his possession, he soon wasted them in building and repairing monasteries for the reception of these monks, all which he richly endowed. Not contented with this, he persuaded the king to bequeath such a profusion of wealth to the churches and monasteries, that the crown was stripped of the greater part of its valuable possessions.\*

*Dunstan banished.*

After the death of Eadred, which happened A. D. 955, his nephew Eadwig succeeded, who detested Dunstan for his insolencies whilst he was in power, and his haughty behaviour to him with regard to his concubine, or wife Elfgiva; so that soon after he was seated upon the throne, he deprived the abbot of all his preferments, and banished him the kingdom; after which he expelled the monks from several of their monasteries, and placed the married clergy in their benefices. But these proceedings being distasteful to his subjects, Eadgar, his brother, rebelled against him, and being confirmed in the government of all the provinces northward of the Thames, he recalled Dunstan, and made him bishop of Worcester in the year 957; and two years after, Eadgar became sole monarch by the death of his brother Eadwig. Dunstan then enjoyed the same degree of power and authority which he had possessed in the reign of Eadred †.

*The advancement of Dunstan.*

Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, died about the year 958, some time before the decease of Eadwig, and the see of that primate lying within the part of the kingdom that Eadwig had been permitted to hold, the archbishopric was by him conferred upon Elisi, bishop of Winchester; but he dying in his passage towards Rome, Brithelm, bishop of Wells, was appointed to succeed him. However, he had scarcely taken his seat before the death of Eadwig opened the way for Eadgar to the possession of his brother's dominions, and as soon as he ascended the throne, Brithelm was obliged to quit his archbishopric in order to make room for Dunstan, bishop of Worcester, the great favourite of the king; and Brithelm, as a man unfit for the performance of that high office, was sent back to the bishopric of Wells, from whence he came ‡.

*The measures pursued by Dunstan in favour of the monks.*

Dunstan thus raised to the see of Canterbury by the favour of his prince, hastened to Rome for the pall, with which he returned the year following, A. D. 961; and now he turned all his thoughts to the completion of the great design he had formed of driving all the married clergy from their monasteries, and placing monks of the Benedictine

\* Inett's Church Hist. vol. 1. p. 316.

† Godwin de Præful. Angl. p. 73.

‡ Malmib. l. 2. c. 7.

order in their room; and as he was well assured of the concurrence of Cent. X. his prince, he still hoped to accomplish his designs, in spite of all the opposition he foresaw would be made by the great body of the bishops and clergy, who were averse to his undertaking. His first care was, therefore, to fill the vacant bishoprics with such men as would adopt his measures. With this view he obtained the bishopric of Worcester, which became vacant at his own advancement, for Oswald, an Englishman by birth, who had been educated as a monk at Fleury in France. This prelate proved a vigorous patron of the monks, and a violent persecutor of the married clergy. About two years after Dunstan, procured the bishopric of Winchester, then vacant, for Ethelwald, one who had been made a monk by Dunstan himself (whilst he was abbot of Glastonbury.) After which he rebuilt the monastery of Abingdon, and was made abbot thereof\*.

Dunstan, having thus procured two such powerful advocates, in order to forward his designs, set about building several monasteries; and these three great champions of the monks began to put their undertaking in execution, using all the persuasions they were masters of, to prevail upon the secular clergy to put away their wives, and to take the monastic vows and habits. Finding, however, soon after, that their persuasions were by no means effectual, they proceeded to acts of violence and oppression. Ethelwald began with the canons of his own cathedral; for finding that all arguments were in vain, he one day turned all those out of the church who would not instantly comply with his orders, viz. to take up the monkish habits, and forsake their wives and children. These unfortunate clergymen, whose affection for their families had prevailed over their interest, were thus at once reduced to beggary and want, when, instead of meeting with any pity from their oppressors, they were loaded with a thousand opprobrious names †. Oswald, bishop of Worcester, soon after followed the example of Ethelwald; but he was not quite so merciless in the execution of his designs; for though he expelled the married clergy from seven monasteries within his diocese, and at last forced those away also that were within the cathedral of Worcester by some kind of fraud we are not acquainted with, yet he condescended to allow them a small pittance for their maintenance ‡, which was indeed but just enough to keep them from starving. In the mean time, Dunstan, and his associates, in order to countenance their tyrannical proceedings, charged the secular clergy with the most heinous crimes, declaring, that their cohabitation with their wives was highly offensive to God; at the same time, they carefully magnified the virtue of their own celibacy; and, in order to strengthen their cause, they had recourse to a thousand fallacies, which were backed by miracles, and pretended visions, most

The secular  
clergy driven  
from their monasteries.

\* Vide Inett's Church Hist. c. 19.

† Angl. Sacra, T. 2. p. 219,

‡ Ibid. p. 200.



Cent. X. of them so gross, that one would naturally wonder, whether their impudence or the credulity of the people was the most ridiculous. By these, and such delusive machinations, these three furious champions of celibacy, in the course of a little time, filled eight and forty monasteries with Benedictine monks\*.

Eadgar secludes the ecclesiastics in the expulsion of the married clergy.

All this was done under the auspices of Eadgar, who was himself a vicious prince, and stopped at nothing to gratify his own passions; yet he was so far prevailed upon by these three tyrannical ecclesiastics, that he seemed even more forward than themselves to depress the secular clergy; so that in the year 969, he gave them a formal commission to expel them all from the monasteries and cathedrals, declaring, that he himself would use all his endeavours to assist them, and, at the same time, he delivered a furious speech, in which he arraigns the married clergy, and loads them with the most heinous accusations, strictly commanding the holy father Dunstan to proceed to blows, assisted by the venerable Ethelwald, and the most reverend Oswald—adding, that to those three he committed the execution of that important work, advising them to strike boldly, and drive those men that were guilty of such great excesses from the church of Christ, and place others in their stead who were holy, and would conform to the religious rules. But let us reflect upon the propriety of this thundering speech in the defence of chastity, coming from the mouth of a libidinous monarch, who had not long before ravished a nun, a young lady of great beauty, and of noble parentage. This scandalous action, however, provoked his confessor Dunstan so much that he enjoined him, by way of penance, not to wear his crown for seven years; also, that he should build a nunnery; and, after all, to prosecute the secular clergy to the utmost of his power. All this he religiously performed†.

Ecclesiastical laws of Eadgar.

As Eadgar was entirely under the influence of Dunstan, and his two associates, the laws for the regulation of the affairs of the church were not neglected by him. His ecclesiastical laws and canons seem in general to have been such as were both just and necessary, when we consider the time in which they were made. They are six, and their tenor as follows:

The first requires the payment of tythes.

The second explains the true nature of the church scot, and proves it to be a stated payment arising from the house of every freeman—it also shews how tythes should be paid where a burying-place is annexed to the church, as also where there is not.

The third appoints the time for the payment of tythes.

The fourth proposes the remedy for the neglect of either of the two following laws.

\* Angl. Sacra, T. 2. p. 201.

† Spelman Concil. T. 1, p. 482.

Cent. X.

The fifth commands the payment of the Peter pence.

And the sixth requires the Lord's day to be kept holy \*.

The canons, which are known by the name of Eadgar's canons, are <sup>Canons of Ead-</sup> sixty-seven in number. The eleventh commands every priest to learn <sup>gar.</sup> some mechanical art, and also to teach it to such young men as were disciples under him. The sixteenth forbids the worship of trees, stones and fountains, with other remaining rites of pagan superstition. The seventeenth requires, that every Christian should teach his children the Belief and the Lord's prayer. The twenty-second forbids any one to become a godfather, or to receive the sacrament, until he had first learnt the offices. The fifty-fourth recommends the clergy to be frequent in their admonition to the people, that they might honestly and justly pay the church dues, and also at their proper times; as their plough alms, fifteen nights before Easter; their tythes of young animals at Pentecost; their tythes of corn at All-saints; their Peter pence at Lammas; and their church-scot at Martinmas. Subjoined to these canons is a penitential, supposed to have been the composition of Dunstan, which requires a very particular confession from the penitents of all the sins done by their bodies, their skin, their flesh, their bones, their sinews, their reins, their gristles, their tongues, their lips, their palates, their teeth, their hair, their marrow, or by every thing hard, or soft, wet, or dry; and the principal penants are as follow: To be prohibited the use of arms; to be enjoined long pilgrimages; to forbid the tarrying two nights in one place, to forbid the cutting of the hair, the paring of the nails, the use of a warm bath, the reposing on a soft bed; to forbid the eating flesh, or drinking strong liquors; also to enjoin to such as could afford it, the building and endowing of churches, or the like; fastings for several years were frequently imposed by way of penance; but these might easily be eluded by the rich; for a man might redeem a year's fasting for thirty shillings, or a great man, who had many servants and dependants, might put an end to a seven year's fast in three days by procuring eight hundred and fifty men to fast that time for him upon bread, water, and vegetables †. This plainly shews the relaxation of the church government in the present period; for this method of fasting by proxy was justly condemned in the council of Cloveshoe, A. D. 747 ‡.

After the death of Eadgar, some check was put to the proceedings <sup>Eadgar's death a check to the designs of Dun-</sup> of the three ecclesiastical champions, who, during the reign of that prince, had been very successful in the expulsion of the secular canons from the monasteries and cathedrals; for the miseries to which the married clergy had been exposed, excited the compassion of many of the nobility; but none seemed more touched with their misfor-

\* Inett's Church Hist. chap. 19.

† Spel. Concil. T. 1. p. 443-478.

‡ Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 197.

Cent. X. tunes than Elfric, earl of Mercia, who, immediately after the decease of Eadgar, would no longer permit the insolencies of the monks, but drove them all out of the monasteries throughout his extensive earldom, and reinstated the secular clergy. In the mean time, Elfwine, duke of the East Angles, who was a stout champion for the monks, joined by Brithnot, earl of Essex, vented all their spleen against the secular clergy in their earldoms, and treated them, if possible, with still greater rigour than they had experienced in the life-time of Eadgar. To quiet these commotions, which seemed likely to produce a civil war, several councils were held, in order that the matter might be solemnly debated, and fairly decided. In these councils, it seems, Dunstan, and his party, were so powerfully opposed by the secular canons, that he was obliged to call in the assistance of some of his holy miracles to support his cause. In one of the councils held at the old monastery at Winchester, A. D. 977, the affair was debated with great warmth, and the opposite party so far prevailed by their arguments, that almost all the ecclesiastics were inclined to conclude the dispute in favour of the secular canons, and to order their reformation to their several monasteries; but whilst the whole council was silent, waiting the answer of Dunstan, on a sudden a loud voice, seeming to proceed from a crucifix, built in the partition wall, was heard to utter these words, "Do not do it!—Do not do it!—You formerly did well!—Do not change now!"—The council was instantly put into the greatest consternation; and Dunstan rising up said, "My brethren, what would ye have more?—Have ye not heard the present affair decided by divine sentence\*?"—The assembly was then broke up in confusion, and nothing concluded upon; for though the opposite party were startled at the strangeness of the thing, yet they were far from being convinced. Therefore, not long after, another council was held at Calne in Wiltshire, A. D. 978, where, whilst the matter was under debate, and warmly argued on both sides, the timber that supported the floor where the secular canons stood, gave way suddenly, by which unfortunate accident the greater part of them were hurt, and several of them killed; and, in the mean time, Dunstan, and those that sided with him, standing upon the main beam that supported the chamber, and which remained immovable, escaped without being hurt. Thus was this council also brought to an end†; but if these events did really happen, and in the manner already mentioned; it must convey to our minds a very unfavourable idea of Dunstan, as well as of the superstition and blindness of those times. It seems, that even this last accident could not convince the canons; and whilst the friends of Dunstan declared that it was a just judgment of God upon the canons for their obstinacy, and a plain manifestation of his will, the other

\* Spel. Concll. T. 1. p. 490.

† Ibid. p. 494, & Angl. Sacra, T. 2. p. 112.  
party

party failed not to run into the other extreme, and accused Dunstan Cent. X. of magic.

What steps Dunstan and his adherents pursued against the seculars from this time, does not appear; but such was the state of the debates at the time of Edward's murder, and, indeed, in a few years after the accession of Æthelred, the kingdom was involved in such desperate calamities, occasioned by the frequent and destructive invasions of the Danes, that little attention could be paid to the affairs of the church. Indeed, the fame of Dunstan, and his two assistants, Oswald and Æthelwald, who are all sainted by their historians, engrossed so much attention, that the acts of the other bishops, or even their names, are scarcely known.

About the year 984, Æthelwald, bishop of Winchester, died; and his death, whilst it gave great uneasiness to the monks, was highly pleasing to the canons whom he had dispossessed, because they now entertained a hope of being again restored. They therefore employed all their interest to procure the election of a clergyman of their own order; but they were disappointed by the superior art of Dunstan, who pretended that St. Andrew appeared to him in a vision, and appointed Elphegus, abbot of Bath, to succeed Æthelwald. By this means he carried his point, to the great joy of the monks, and disappointment of the distressed seculars\*.

Four years after the decease of Æthelwald, Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, departed this life, A. D. 988, (having held the bishopric of London, with the archbishopric of Canterbury, near twenty-seven years) leaving behind him the title of the Father and Restorer of the Monks; and they in return for such high favour, on their part, have not been backward in gracing his memory with such wonderful encomiums, that his very shrine became, in after ages, the object of worship and adoration. Besides his frequent contests and victories over the devil, his miracles are all laid before us, and the particular favour that God shewed towards him; all which are so gross and absurd in their relation, that one cannot help being astonished at the impudence and irreligion of his biographers, who have seriously told so many open and bare-faced falsties †.

Upon

\* Anglia Sacra, T. 2. p. 221.

† Let the following impious story stand as a proof; it is told by his biographer Osborn (Anglia Sacra, T. 2. p. 114, 115), and afterwards repeated by Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury, in his life of this primate. It is, as follows, translated by Dr. Henry: "The most admirable, the most inestimable Father Dunstan, whose perfections exceeded all human imagination, was admitted to behold the Mo-

ther of God, and his own mother, in eternal glory; for before his death, he was carried up into heaven to be present at the nuptials of his own mother with the eternal King, which were celebrated by the angels with the most sweet and joyous songs.---When the angels reproached him for his silence on this great occasion, so honourable to his mother, he excused himself on account of his being unacquainted with those  
"sweet

The troubles of the kingdom put a stop to church matters.

Death of Æthelwald.

Death of Dunstan.

**Cent. X.** Upon the decease of Dunstan, Ethelgar, late abbot of the new monastery of Winchester, and at this time bishop of Seolsey, succeeded to the chair of Canterbury; but dying the following year, he was succeeded by Siricius, bishop of Wilton, who held the government of that see about four years. Both these primates had been monks in the abbey of Glastonbury; but, from the confusion of the times, and the shortness of their pontificates, nothing memorable seems to have been done by either.

**Death of Oswald.** About three years after the death of Dunstan, Oswald (the longest survivor of the three furious champions for the monks) deceased. This prelate held the bishopric of Worcester, to which he had been first elected even after his promotion to the archbishopric of York\*, which honour he enjoyed a considerable time before his death. He was succeeded in both his sees by Aldulf, abbot of Peterborough.—Oswald, in holding two sees at once, only followed the example of his friend Dunstan, who held those of London and Cautebury at the same time.—This mercenary proceeding, which was certainly contrary to the established rules of the church, still adds to the unfavourable ideas we have already had so much cause to entertain of these holy faints.

**Wretched state of the nation.** From this period to the end of the tenth century, the state was involved in such a continual scene of trouble and confusion, that no affairs relative to the church could be attended to, or, if they were, they are not transmitted down to us.—The miserable calamities that fell upon the English nation at the latter end of this century, and the beginning of the eleventh, are (not without just reason) in a great measure ascribed to the prevalent zeal for a monastic life, by which the kingdom was deprived of many of its most able protectors, and impoverished by the continual sums that were lavished upon the monasteries and cathedrals†. Indeed, so blinded were the people, that in the latter end of the reign of Æthelred, A. D. 1014, it was decreed in council, that every person who was of age should go bare-foot to church upon the feast of Saint Michael, having previously fasted three days upon bread, water, and raw herbs, and confessed of their sins; and also that every priest, with his whole congregation, should three days successively go bare-foot in solemn procession. The monks and nuns, in their monasteries, were commanded to celebrate the mass against the Pagans at every canonical hour, when they were to lay prostrate on the ground, and sing this psalm: “Lord, how are they

“ sweet and heavenly strains: but being  
 “ a little instructed by the angels, he broke  
 “ out into this melodious song, *O King!*  
 “ *Ruler of Nations,*” &c. One would almost have thought it impossible that so

shocking a story should have been written seriously, or ever believed.

\* Godwin de Præsul. Angl. p. 75.

† Vide Inett's Church Hist. vol. 1.

increased

increased that trouble me!\*” vainly imagining that due observance of Cent. X. such ceremonies as these, would be more efficacious in destroying of their enemies, than the repeated efforts of their armies.

Near the close of the last century, A. D. 955, Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury, died, and was succeeded in that office by Ælfric, formerly bishop of Wilton, a zealous primate, who amidst all the distractions of the state, was careful and assiduous in the cause of religion; and observing the ignorance of the clergy in general at that time, he translated no less than eighty homilies from the Latin into the Saxon tongue, which were then appointed to be read publicly in the churches, and from the homily designed for Easter-day, the doctrine concerning the sacrament, as it stood in that early period, is settled beyond a doubt; for the author hesitates not to declare, that the bread and wine were only mystically and spiritually to be understood as the body and blood of Christ; that the things themselves underwent no actual change, but remained still the same, and subject to corruption; and this is a convincing proof that the superstitious doctrine of transubstantiation had not as yet affected the Saxon church. He also wrote several epistles recommending a reformation of the vices of the times; and the canons that are attributed to him, are many in number, and well suited to the times for which they were intended†: yet, though they generally bear the name of canons, (which appellation perhaps they might take from the tone of authority with which they seem to be given) they appear to be the injunctions only of a kind of episcopal charge, and not such as were enacted by any ecclesiastical synod. In these canons we find the names and offices of seven orders of priests; as,

Ælfric's homilies and canons.

First, the Ostiary, who opened and shut the church doors, and tolled the bells.

Secondly, the Lector, who read the scriptures in the church.

Thirdly, the Exorcist, whose office was to drive away evil spirits by invocations and abjurations.

Fourthly, the Acolyth, who held the tapers whilst the gospel was read, and the mass celebrated.

Fifthly, the Sub-deacon, who had the charge of the holy vessels, and attended upon the deacon at the altar.

\* Johnson's Canons, A. D. 1014. Spelm. Concil. T. 1. p. 530.

† Mr. Wharton, in his dissertation concerning the two Ælfric's, is inclined to think that the present primate was not the author of these homilies, letters, and canons, but gives the honour of them to another man named Ælfric Putta, or Puttoc,

who was archbishop of York in the reign of king Cnut; but after all the arguments produced by Mr. Wharton, the matter still remains doubtful. For further satisfaction, the learned reader must be referred to the work itself. Wharton Dissertat. Anglia Sacra, T. 1. p. 125; & vide Inett's church Hist. vol. 1. p. 366.

Cent. XI. Sixthly, the Deacon, who ministered to the mass priest, placed the oblation on the altar, read the gospel, baptised children, and gave the housel to the people.

Seventhly, the Mass Priest, or Presbyter, who preached, baptised, and consecrated the housel. The mass priest was of the same order with the bishop; only the latter was a title of greater honour.

Another canon established the difference between the secular and monkish clergy; and the next, namely, the nineteenth, appointed the tide songs that were to be sung, and the proper hours for each song; as,

The Ught Song, or Mattins, early in the morning.

The Prime Song, at seven o'clock.

The Undern Song, at nine o'clock.

The Mid-day Song, at twelve o'clock.

The None Song, at three o'clock.

The Night Song, at nine o'clock at night.

The priests were also commanded to provide themselves with all the necessary books, as the Gospel-book, the Epistle-book, the Psalter, the Mass-book, the Song-book, the Hand-book, the Calendar, the Passional, the Penitential, and the Reading-book. They were also to explain the gospel every Sunday publicly in the Saxon tongue, and not to take any money for the baptising children, or the performance of any other official duties. Many superstitious ceremonies were also contained in that famous charge, as in particular upon Good-Friday, the people were to kiss and adore the cross. Nor were the priests to be ever without some consecrated oil, as well to baptise children, as to anoint the sick, which last operation they were not to perform unless at the immediate request of the sick person.

Ælfric favours  
the monks.

Ælfric was himself a great patron of the monkish clergy, yet neither his doctrine nor example could produce the wished for effect upon the seculars. However, he seemed to think that marriage was not unlawful to the clergy, though inexpedient, and a burthen to them, as it frequently prevented the proper execution of their holy function. The seculars, whenever they were called upon to renounce their wives and children, pleaded, that they imitated St. Peter himself, who was a married man, and had children; and this Ælfric himself confesses. However, in the decline of his life, he dispossessed the canons of the church of Canterbury, notwithstanding his former moderation, and the declaration he made to the seculars, that "he meant not to compel them to put away their wives, but to inform them how to behave themselves;" which was agreeable to the laws established after his death by the council convened by Æthelred in the year 1008. In which (although it was called for the settlement of the emergencies of the state) there were some things

things agreed upon for the regulation of the church; amongst which we find, that such of the secular clergy as were yet in the monasteries, had the privilege confirmed of continuing there, and of eating in the common hall; but then it was ordained, that they should live chastely, and not transgress the rules of the house on pain of expulsion. On the whole, it appears, that Ælfric not only expelled the seculars from Canterbury, but also obtained a grant of Æthelred to confirm that proceeding; and a new charter, with additional privileges in favour of the monks \*.

Ælfric died in the year 1005, and was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Ælfegh, bishop of Winchester, who, six years after, was cruelly murdered by the Danes. His successor was Leving. From the time of the murder of Ælfegh to the accession of Cnut, the church affairs are buried in total obscurity, excepting the names of a few bishops, and their successors; so that nothing can be traced, if any matters of consequence were really transacted, during that period.

In the time of Cnut, it appears that the newly converted Danes, as well perhaps as many of the Saxons, with whom they were then intermarried, were not thoroughly grounded in the true faith, which occasioned the law that was established by that prince against sorcery and enchantments, to which delusive arts the northern nations were all much addicted; and another law, somewhat similar, was also made by Cnut, which strictly forbid the worship of the sun, the moon, fire, fruits of the earth, rivers, stones, fountains, or any kind of trees and wood. Another law required, that all the people should unite in the worship of the true God †.

In this century, the zeal for visiting the shrines of saints, and the passion for reliques, revived again, and shone in its full glory. Excited by this religious ardour, Agelnoth, who succeeded Leving in the archbishopric of Canterbury, laid out a prodigious sum of money at Rome to purchase the arm of Augustine, bishop of Hippo ‡ in the year 1020; and the following year, after his return, his valuable relic was presented to the church of Coventry. The same zeal prevailed with queen Emma, when she gave a vast price for the arm of St. Bartholomew; but whole limbs of the great saints or apostles could only be purchased by the nobility and richer class of people; the meaner were obliged to be content with fingers, pieces of hair, paring of the nails, or the bits of garments of the more inferior saints. When occasion required that the reliques of any remarkable saint should be transported from one place to another, the vast expence that was bestowed

\* Inett's Church Hist. vol. 1. chap. 21.

† Johnson's Canons. Spel. Concil. p. 538.

‡ He gave, according to Malmesbury,

100 talents, or 6000 pound weight of silver, and one talent, or 60 pound weight of gold; a vast sum, particularly at that time.



Cent. XI. upon the preparations to make the procession grand and pompous, and the treasures that were frequently lavished upon the ornamenting their shrines, or the churches where they were buried, are matters truly astonishing. Into all these fashionable follies Cnut himself frequently ran; for the wealth he bestowed to adorn the old monastery of Winchester, and the churches of Glastonbury and Winchester, as well as upon his religious buildings, his expensive pilgrimages to the shrine of Cuthbert, the northern saint, and his journey to Rome, are what make a considerable figure in the ecclesiastical history of this time, which cannot be read without an equal degree of pity and contempt\*.

Cnut's journey  
to Rome.

What was the true motive of Cnut's journey to Rome, cannot perhaps be easily ascertained; the reason he himself gives is, that it was undertaken in honour of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. When he arrived at Rome, he procured several taxes that had been levied upon such devotees as journied on pilgrimage to Rome, to be taken off. He also, according to his own declaration, made great complaint of the pecuniary exactions that were annually made from the English archbishops when they received the pall from the see of Rome, which extortions he determined to redress. These complaints he made in a full council before the pope, four archbishops, twenty-four bishops, and many princes and great noblemen. He then concludes his epistle, which was written to Ailnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, with vowing to devote the rest of his life to the service of almighty God; recommending, at the same time, to the clergy and magistrates to maintain order and justice throughout his dominions until his return †.

Conclusion of  
the Ecclesiasti-  
cal History of  
the Saxons.

During the short reigns of Harold and Hardicnut, the two sons of Cnut, nothing material happened in the church affairs; nor did any interesting change take place, either during the reign of Edward the Confessor, or the busy year in which Harold sat upon the throne. Edward the Confessor, being a great favourer of the Normans, not only raised them to the highest civil and military posts, but also promoted many of them to the principal ecclesiastical preferments. Amongst the last, Robert Gemiticensis, a Norman monk, was the highest in esteem, who being first made bishop of London, A. D. 1044, was afterwards, A. D. 1050, raised to the see of Canterbury, and whilst he was gone to Rome to receive the pall, the king nominated Sparhafoe, abbot of Abington, to succeed him in his see of London; but Robert, at his return, for some time, amused the abbot, and deferred the consecration, untill he had, by his subtle arguments, persuaded the king, in a great council, which met in September, A. D. 1051, to recall his

\* Vide Inett's Church Hist. vol. 1.

† Malmsh. lib. 2. c. 11.  
nomination

nomination, and appoint one William, a Norman, to be bishop of Cent. XI. London instead of the abbot; and soon after, by the persuasion of the primate, Edward raised Ulf, another Norman, to the see of Dorchester. But not long after, the Normans becoming disagreeable to the people, they were obliged to quit their high stations as well in the church as in the state, and make a precipitate retreat from England to save their lives. After Robert fled from England, Stigund, bishop of Winchester, was chosen to succeed him in the chair, who possessed the archbishopric at the time of the arrival of William the Conqueror\*.

\* Vide Inett's Church Hist. vol. 1. chap. 22.

END OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE SAXONS.

# C H R O N I C L E

## O F

# E N G L A N D.

### P A R T II. C H A P. II.

#### *Ancient Religion of the Danes, &c.*

HAVING already given, in the former volume, some short account of the ancient religion of our Saxon ancestors, and made mention of the three principal deities adored by all the northern nations, it now remains that I fulfil my promise of giving as complete an account of the mythology of the Danes as the limits of this work will permit, which will conclude and explain all that was left unfinished in the preceding chapter\*.

References to the former volume.

The three principal deities, of whom we have made mention before, viz. Odin or Woden, Thor and Frigga, seem not to have been considered by all the northern nations as equal to each other in power or importance. The Danes paid the greatest veneration to Odin; the inhabitants of Norway and Iceland seemed to give the preference to Thor; and the Swedes appear to have chosen for their tutelary deity Freya or Frey, an inferior goddess, who, by the Edda †, is reported to preside over the seasons of the year, and to bestow peace, wealth and plenty.

Concerning the three histories of the Danes

“The first and most ancient of all the deities is Odin, who” (says the Edda) “governeth all things; and the rest of the gods, although they are very powerful themselves, obey him as children obey their father; and he is called the universal father, because he is the father of all the gods. He is also named the Father of Battles, because he receives those as his sons that die in the fight; to them also he assigns the palaces of

The number and offices of the Danish gods, and first Odin.

\* Vol. 1. part 3. chap. 3. page 211.

† The Edda is the system of the ancient Danish mythology, and is given at large, with an English translation, in a work, entitled, Northern Antiquities, vol. 2.

Valhall.

Valhall and Vingolf, and salutes them with the title of heroes. The name of his wife is Frigga, who knoweth the destinies of men, which, however, she never revealeth.

Thor. "Next to Odin, Thor is the first and greatest amongst the gods: he is called Afa Thor, or Lord Thor; and Ake Thor, or Active Thor; he is the strongest amongst the gods or men; his dominion is named Thrudwanger, and his palace Bifkerner, in which there are five hundred and forty halls; his chariot is drawn by two he goats, and in this chariot he goes into the country of the giants, and therefore he is called Oka Thor, or Rapid Thor. He has three valuable things, the first is his club named Thiolner, that makes the giants fear him; the second is the belt of prowess, that being put on redoubles his former strength; the third are iron gauntlets, with which he holds his mace or club. His exploits were so many, and so wonderful, that no person is esteemed learned enough to relate them all.

Blader. "The third god in power is Blader, the second son of Odin, who is of an amiable disposition, and perfectly beautiful; his dwelling is in the palace of Breidablik, where nothing impure can be admitted, and, upon the columns, are engraven verses capable of recalling the dead to life.

Niord. "The next god is Niord, whose dwelling is in a place called Noatun, where he governeth the winds, and checks the fury of the sea, the storms, and the fire: whoever would succeed in navigation, hunting, or fishing, are directed to pray to this deity. Niord had two children named Frey and Freya—Frey is the mildest of the gods, and hath dominion over the rain, the sun, and things that grow upon the earth; he it is that dispenses peace and riches to mankind. Freya, the other child, has her habitation in heaven, which is called Folvanga, (or the union of the people) and to her is due one half of those slain in battle; the other half belongs to Odin. She goes forth from her palace in a chariot drawn by two cats; she attends to the vows of those who seek her assistance, and from her the women took their name; she delights most in the songs of lovers, who, if they hope to be successful, ought to address themselves to her.

Tyr. "The fifth god to Niord is Tyr," (who is to be distinguished from Thor) "one of the most bold and intrepid of the gods: he dispenses victory in the battle, and his valour is so great that it became a proverb to say of a valiant man, 'He is as brave as Tyr.'

Brage. "The sixth next god is Brage, the god of wisdom and eloquence: he was not only the prince, but the parent of poetry, which, from his name, was called Brager; and from him also the most distinguished poets had their title. His wife is called Iduna, to whose care is committed the keeping of certain apples that restored the gods, when they became aged, to their youth again.

Heimdall. "The next powerful deity is Heimdall, the son of the nine virgin sisters: he is called the White God; he is also distinguished by the

the appellations of Hialmskidiu and Gulltanniu, because his teeth are of pure gold. His dwelling is at the end of the bridge Besroft, or the Rainbow, in a castle called Celestial Fort: he is the keeper or centinel of the gods, and sitteth at the entry into heaven to prevent the giants from taking possession of the bridge; nor can he easily be surpris'd, for he sleepeth less than a bird, and seeth by night as well as by day an hundred leagues round about him; and his ear is so remarkably fine, that he heareth the grafs grow upon the earth, and the wool upon the sheep's back, so that the smallest sound cannot escape him; and he has with him a trumpet which would be heard by all the worlds.

Hoder, the next divinity, is blind, but extremely strong. Hoder.

The ninth god is Vidar, who is called the Silent God: he wears thick shoes, but of such wonderful contexture, that by means of them he can walk in the air, and tread upon the water, and in strength he almost equals the god Thor.

The tenth god called Vile or Vali, is one of the sons of Odin and Vile. Rinda: he is bold in war, and a skilful archer.

The eleventh god is Uller, the offspring of Sifia, and son-in-law to Thor, who is so expert in shooting his arrows, and runneth so swiftly with his scates, that none are able to contend with him: his person is handsome, and he is justly esteemed a hero.

Torsfete, the twelfth god, is the son of Balder, who resides in a palace named Glitner, which is upheld by pillars of gold, and covered with a roof of silver, where he reconciles and appeases all sorts of quarrels, whether amongst the gods or men. Torfete.

Besides these twelve gods, there was a malevolent and powerful spirit called Loke, "whom (says the Edda) some reckon in the number of the gods; others call him the Calumniator of the gods, the Artificer of Fraud, and the Enemy both of the gods and men. Loke is the son of the giant Tarbantes and of Laufeya: he is handsome, well formed in his person; but he is evil, light, and inconstant; he surpasse all beings in perfidy and cunning, and hath often exposed the gods to great perils by his artifices. His wife is named Siguna, by whom he had some children; but by the giantess Angerbode, or the Messenger of Ill, he had three monstrous children; the first of which is the Wolf Fenris; the second, the Great Serpent of Midgard; and the third, Hella or Death. The gods foresaw the danger that would happen from this evil offspring; wherefore the almighty father sent certain gods to bring them before him. The serpent he threw down into the bottom of the sea, where he increased to such a degree that he wound himself round the whole globe of the earth, so that he can easily take the end of his tail into his mouth. Hella was cast into Nifheim or Hell, where she had given her dominion over nine worlds, into which she dispatches those that are sent to her, which are such as die of diseases or of old age: her apartments are strongly built and fenced

fenced with large grates. Her hall is Grief; her table is Famine; her knife is Hunger; her servant Delay; her maid Slackness; her gate precipice; her porch Faintness; her bed Pain and Sickness; and her tent Cursing and Howling. Half her body is blue, the other half covered with skin of the colour of human flesh, her look is full of terror by which she may be easily distinguished \*".

The goddesses of the Danes, and their offices. The Danes also worshipped twelve principal goddesses, of whom Frigga was the chief.

Saga. "Saga, the second, whose habitation was called Suarbeck.

Eira. Eira, the third, was the goddess of medicine.

Gefione. Gefione, the fourth, being herself a pure virgin, took into her service all chaste maidens after their decease.

Fulla. Fulla, the fifth, was also a beautiful virgin who had committed to her keeping the Toilette and slippers of Frigga; she was also intrusted with all the secrets of that goddess.

Freya. Freya, the sixth, was the most beautiful of all the goddesses except Frigga; she married a husband named Oder, by whom she had a daughter named Nofsa, so very fair that whatever was beautiful or precious was called by her name. Oder left his wife, and journeyed into countries very remote, since which time Freya seeks him continually weeping, and her tears are drops of pure gold: in search of Oder, she travelled over many countries, so that by different nations she is called by different names.

Siofna. The seventh goddess is Siofna, who inspires the hearts of men and women with love.

Lofna. Lofna, the eighth goddess, is possessed of a gift bestowed upon her by Odin and Frigga, by which she reconciles lovers to each other when they are most at variance.

Vara. Vara, the ninth divinity, presides over oaths, and particularly over the vows of lovers, whose breach of faith she constantly punishes.

Vora. Vora, the tenth, is the goddess of curiosity and penetration.

Synia. Synia, the eleventh, is the portress of the hall who shuts the doors upon such as ought not to be admitted—she also presided at trials, where any were about to deny what was laid to their charge.

Lyna. The twelfth is called Lyna, to whose charge were committed such men as Frigga chose to deliver from danger."

Other Deities. Besides these, they adored a divinity named Snotra, the goddess of Prudence and Good-manners; and Gna, who was the messenger of Frigga. "There are also (continues the Edda) many virgins that officiate in Val-hall, pouring out drink for the Heroes, and taking care of whatever belongs to the table. These goddesses are called Valkyries, and they are sent by Odin into the battle to chuse out such as shall be slain, and to dispose of the victory. Gudar, Roftra, and the youngest of the Destinies or

\* Edda. Northern Antiq. vol. 2.

Faries, who preside over Time, whose name is Skuldar (or the Future) go forth on horseback every day to chuse the slain, and regulate the slaughter.—Jord (or the Earth) the mother of Thor, and Rinda, the mother of Vale, are also to be esteemed goddesses.\* Nor were these all the deities that the northern nations adored; for they believed that the earth the water, the fire, the sun, the moon, and the stars, had each its respective divinity. Trees, forests, rivers, lakes, and mountains were also thought to be inhabited and governed by certain genii, capable of doing hurt or good, and, therefore, intitled to some particular marks of adoration, and religious worship\*.

“The principal city of the gods is under the great ash Ydrasil, where they assemble every day to administer justice. This ash is the greatest and best of all trees; its branches extend themselves over the whole world, and reach above the heavens; it is supported by three roots at an immense distance from each other: one of them is amongst the gods, another amongst the giants, and the third extends to the ninth world, or hell, where it is gnawed by the serpent Nidhoger. Under the second root is a fountain, wherein Wisdom and Prudence lie concealed; and under another root is a holy fountain of Time Past, from whence the three virgins, or destinies, named Urda, or the Past; Verdandi, or the Present; and Skulda, or the Future, continually draw up water with which they bedew the ash. The water preserves the branches from withering, and restores the beauty of the foliage; after having refreshed the leaves, it falls to the earth again, and forms the dew from which the bees extract their honey. Upon the top of the ash is seated an eagle of astonishing sagacity; a squirrel runs up and down the ash, sowing discord between the eagle and the serpent concealed at its root”†.

Having thus seen the principal deities of our northern ancestors, and their chief abode, we shall, in the next place, proceed to the examination of the creation of the universe, which was attributed to Odin, the greatest of all their gods; and this will be best done in the words of an ancient Icelandic poet‡. “In the day spring of the ages, there was neither sea nor shore, nor refreshing breezes; there was neither earth below, nor heaven above to be distinguished; the whole was one vast abyss, without herb, and without seeds; the sun had then no palace; the stars knew not their dwelling-places, the moon was ignorant of her power: there was a luminous, burning, flaming world towards the south, and from this world flowed out incessantly into the abyss that lay towards the north, torrents of sparkling fire, which, in proportion as they moved far away from their source, congealed on their falling into the abyss, and so filled it with scum and ice. Thus was the abyss, by little and little, filled quite full; but there remained within it a light and immoveable air, and thence exhaled icy va-

The chief city  
of the gods,  
where situated.

Creation of the  
world.

\* Northern Antiq. vol. 1. cap. v.

† Ancient poem of the Voluspa. Mal-

† Edda, vol. 2. Northern Antiquities. Ict, vol. 1. chap. 7.

pours; then a warm breath, coming from the south, melted those vapours, and formed of them living drops, whence was born the giant Ymer. It is reported, that, whilst he slept, an extraordinary sweat under his arm-pits, produced a male and female, whence is sprung the race of the giants; a race, evil and corrupt, as well as Ymer their author. Another race was brought forth, which formed alliances with that of the giant Ymer: this was called the family of Bor, so named from the first of that family, who was the father of Odin. The sons of Bor slew the giant Ymer, and the blood ran from his wound in such abundance, that it caused a general inundation, wherein perished all the giants, except only one, who saved himself in a bark, and escaped with all his family. Then a new world was formed. The sons of Bor, or the gods, dragged the body of the giant into the abyss, and of it made the earth: the sea and rivers were composed of his blood, the earth of his flesh, the great mountains of his bones, the rocks of his teeth, and of splinters of his bones broken. They made of his skull the vault of heaven, which is supported by four dwarfs, named South, North, East, and West; they fixed tapers there to enlighten it, and assigned to other fires certain spaces which they were to run through, some of them in heaven, and others under heaven. The days were distinguished, and the years were numbered; they made the earth round, and surrounded it with the deep ocean, upon the banks of which they placed the giants. One day as the sons of Bor were walking upon the sea shore, they found two pieces of wood floating upon the water; they took them out, and made a man of the one, and a woman of the other. The eldest of the gods gave them life and souls; the second, motion; the third, the gift of speech, hearing and sight, to which he added beauty and raiment. From this man and this woman named Aske and Embla, is descended the race of men who are permitted to inhabit the earth". Night is said to have been the daughter of a giant named Nor, and her complexion was black; but being wedded to Daglingar, who was of the family of the gods, she brought forth Day, a child beautiful and shining. Afterwards, Odin took both Day, and his mother Night, and placed them in heaven, and gave to each of them a horse and a car. Night goes first, and her horse is named Renifane, (or Frosty Mane) who every morning as he begins his course, moistens the earth with the foam that drops from the bit of his bridle, and this is the Dew. The horse that was given to Day, is called Skinfaxa, (or Shining Mane) and by his radiant mane he illuminates the air and the earth. Sunna and Mane were two children of a man named Mundilfara, but the sublimity of their names gave offence to the gods, who carried them both up into heaven; and to Sunna, who was a female, the guidance of the chariot of the Sun was committed, which the gods, to illuminate the earth, had composed of the fires from the flaming southern world; at the same time, under

\* Edda. Northern Antiq. vol. 2.



each horse they placed two skins filled with air to cool and refresh them; and hence comes the cool, refreshing breezes of the morning. As for Mane, who was a man, his office was to regulate the course of the moon through all her quarters. He one day carried away two children named Bill and Hiuke, as they were returning from a fountain, carrying between them a pitcher suspended on a stick. "These two children" (adds the Edda) "always accompany the moon, as one may observe easily even from the earth." The reason assigned for the swiftness of the course of the sun and moon is, that they are closely pursued by two wolves who were one day destined to destroy them. These wolves come from the forest of Iarnvid (or Iron Wood) all the trees of which are of iron; where an old sorceress of the race of the giants has her habitation, and who brought both these monsters into the world. "One in particular" (continues the Edda) "of that race is said to be the most formidable of all: he is called Managarm; a monster that fattens himself with the substances of men who draw near to their end; sometimes he swallows up the moon, and stains the heaven and the air with blood." The last part of this quotation explains the ideas the ancient northern nations had of eclipses, and naturally accounts for the general practice of making noises at the time they happened, which was to fright the monster away, who they thought would otherwise devour the two great luminaries\*.

After the gods had finished their own habitation, and made the Of the Dwarfs, creation of the world complete, "they seated themselves" (continues the Edda) "upon their thrones, distributed justice, and took under consideration the affairs of the dwarfs †, a species of beings bred in the

\* Northern Antiquities, vol. 2.

† I cannot help adding here the excellent remarks that M. Mallet makes upon this curious passage. It is as follows, translated in the 2d vol. of the Northern Antiquities, p. 46. "We may discover here one of the effects of that ignorant prejudice which hath made us, for so many years, regard all arts and handicrafts as the occupation of mean people and slaves.----The Goths and Celts, imagining there was something magical in mechanic skill and industry, could scarcely believe that an able artist was one of their own species, or descended from the same common origin. This, it must be granted, was a very foolish conceit; but let us consider what might possibly facilitate the entrance of it into their minds. There was, perhaps, some neighbouring people bordered upon one of the Celtic or Gothic tribes, and which, although less warlike than themselves, and much inferior in stature and strength, might yet excel them in dexterity; and, adding

themselves to manual arts, might carry on a commerce with them sufficiently extensive to have the fame of it spread pretty far. All these circumstances will agree well enough with the Laplanders, who are still as famous for their magic as remarkable for the lowness of their stature; pacific even to a degree of cowardice, but of a mechanic industry, which formerly must have appeared very considerable. The stories that were invented concerning this people, passing through the mouths of so many ignorant relaters, would soon acquire all the degrees of the marvellous of which they were susceptible. Thus the Dwarfs soon became the forgers of enchanted armour, upon which neither swords nor conjurations could make any impression.----They were possessed of caverns full of treasure entirely at their own disposal, &c.---As the Dwarfs were feeble, and of but small courage, they were supposed to be crafty, full of artifice and deceit. This, which in the old romances is called *Dissimulation*,

dust of the earth, just as worms are in a dead carcass. It was indeed in the body of the giant Ymir that they were engendered, and first began to live and move. At first, they were only worms; but, by order of the gods, they at length partook of both human shape and reason; nevertheless, they always dwell in subterraneous caverns, and among the rocks”\*.

Amusements of  
the departed  
souls.

The souls of Heroes, who died with their swords in their hands, had no sooner quitted their bodies, than they were carried up into Valhall, or the palace of Odin, where they were feasted with the flesh of the Boar Serimner, which was more than sufficient to supply them all, for though it was prepared every morning by the cook Andrimner, and served up to the table, yet every night the animal became intire again. Their drink was hydromel or mead, which every day distilled from the paps of a she goat, so plentifully as to fill a pitcher large enough to enebriate all the heroes. “Odin, the illustrious father of armies,” sits at a table by himself, and all the food that is set before him he gives to two wolves, for he himself needs no food; for wine is to him instead of every other aliment. “Two ravens are constantly sitting upon the shoulders of this god, who whisper in his ear whatever news they have heard or seen. The one of them is named Hugin, or Spirit; the other, Munien, or Memory. These he lets loose every day, and after they have made their excursions over the whole world, they return again at the hour of repast; and hence it is that Odin derives his great knowledge.” But to return to the heroes, who when they are not feasting are following the amusements allotted for them. “As soon as they have put on their habits, they take their arms, and entering the lists, fight till they have cut one another in pieces; yet, at mid-day, the hour of their repast, they all return again unhurt to carouse in the palace of Odin.”

Description of  
the Last Day.

Loke, the malevolent spirit, of whom we have spoken before, had by his continual mischiefs, so far exasperated the gods that they were determined to punish him. Loke, apprised of his danger, fled away;

is the character always given them in those fabulous narratives; all these fancies having received the seal of time, and universal consent, could no longer be contested; and it was the business of the poets to assign a fit origin for such ungracious beings. This was done by their pretended rite from the carcass of a great dead giant. The Dwarfs, at first, were only the maggots engendered there by its putrefaction: afterwards, the gods bestowed upon them understanding and cunning. By this fiction the northern warriors justified their contempt of them, and, at the same time, accounted for their small stature, their industry, and their supposed propensity for

inhabiting caves and cliffs of the rocks. After all, the notion is not every where exploded that there are, in the bowels of the earth, Fairies, or a kind of dwarfish, diminutive beings of human shape, remarkable for their riches, their activity, and malevolence. In many countries of the north, the people are still firmly persuaded of their existence. In Iceland, at this day, the good folks shew the very rocks and hills, in which they maintain that there are swarms of these small subterraneous men of the most diminutive size, but most delicately shaped.”

\* Edda, *ibid*.

but

but his retreat being discovered by Odin, he was at last taken, and confined upon three sharp stones, with a serpent over his head, whose venom falling upon him, "makes him howl with anguish, and twist his body about with such violence, that all the earth is shaken with it, and this produces earthquakes." In this horrid situation he was to abide until the general conflagration of the universe, called the "Twilight of the Gods," which is thus described in the Edda. "In the first place will come the great, the desolating Winter, when the snow shall fall from every part of heaven, then shall the cold be extreme, and the tempest violent, and the sun shall cease to be useful: three constant winters shall pass away without the intervention of one summer; this shall be preceded by three winters more, when war shall be spread all over the earth; brothers shall stain themselves with brothers blood; children shall become the murderers of their own parents; parents shall slay their children; incest and adultery shall be common; no man shall spare his friend.—A barbarous age shall this be, an age of swords, an age of tempests, an age of wolves, when the shield shall be broken until the destruction of the world. The wolf shall devour the sun, and another monster shall destroy the moon, and the stars shall fall from heaven; the earth shall be shaken, the mountains cast down from their foundations, and the trees torn up by the roots; the bonds and chains of the evil spirits shall be broken, the wolf Fenris shall be let loose, the great serpent shall roll himself in the sea, and, by his motions, overflow the earth: then shall the ship *Naglefara* be set afloat; this ship, which is composed of the nails of dead men, shall be piloted by the giant *Rymer*. The wolf *Fenris* advancing, openeth his monstrous jaws, which touch both heaven and earth, and would extend still further if there were space sufficient; and the great serpent, close at his side, breathes forth floods of venom; the heavens are burst in sunder, and, through the breach, the evil genii of the fire enter on horseback, led by *Surtur* (the black) who is encompassed by burning fire, which goes before and follows him, and his sword shines as the sun. The passing of the genii on horseback shall break the bridge of heaven\*: they arrive at a plain, where they are joined by the wolf *Fenris*, the great serpent *Loke*, who has broken the chains with which he was bound, and the giant *Rymer*. *Heimdal*, the porter of the gods, blowing violently his clanging trumpet, the gods awake and assemble. The great ash *Ydrasil* is violently shaken; heaven and earth are full of horror and affright. *Odin* attacks the wolf *Fenris*, but is devoured by him; *Fenris* is then slain by *Vidar*; *Thor* encounters the great serpent, and beats the monster to the earth, but quickly after perishes himself; *Heimdal* and *Loke* slay each other;

\* "The gods erected a bridge" (says it is called "the Rainbow." Edda Iceland. Mythol. 8. the Edda) which extends from heaven to earth, and its name is *Bessoft*;" but on earth

then Surtur darts fire and flame over all the earth, and the whole is quickly consumed” \*.

A new earth arising from the ruins of the former.

After the death of the gods, and destruction of the universe, “shall emerge from the bosom of the waves, an earth, clothed with a most lovely verdure; the floods shall retire, and the fields produce their fruit without culture; misfortunes shall be banished from the world; Blader, and the warrior gods, shall return to inhabit the ruined palaces of Odin; the gods shall assemble in the fields of Ida, and discourse together concerning the heavenly palaces, whose ruins are before them; they shall recollect their former conversation, and the ancient discourses of Odin. A palace called Gimle, more resplendent than the sun, shall arise to view, adorned with a golden roof, there the assemblies of good men shall inhabit, and give themselves up to joy and pleasure throughout all ages †. Whilst remote from the sun is an abode called Nastrand, the gates of which look towards the north; there drops of poison rain through the windows: it is built of the carcases of serpents; there, in rapid rivers, are plunged the souls of perjured men and assassins, and those who seek to seduce the wives of other men ‡: in another place, their condition is still worse, for there a horrid monster hacks to pieces the bodies of those sent thither.”——“Then the powerful, the valiant, he who governs all things, issues forth, with great power, from his habitations on high to render his divine judgments, and to pronounce his sentences: he terminates all differences, and establishes the sacred destinies, which will remain to eternity §.”

Explanation of the foregoing passages.

In the foregoing extracts we have an epitome of the mythology of the ancient northern philosophers, which, divested of all its allegory, seems to be as follows.—They believed that Nature herself was in a state of constant decay, being continually warred upon by the malevolent powers, who were, with great difficulty, resisted by the gods: that, when the time should come, that all things were ripe for destruction, the efforts of the gods (notwithstanding they were assisted by the spirits of departed heroes) would no longer be sufficient to withstand the attacks of the evil powers, who, bursting from their chains, fill the universe with ruin and confusion; and though the gods, with their assistants, in the end destroy their enemies, yet their conquest proves fatal to themselves, for they also perish in the general conflagration. When the present world is consumed, we see a supreme power arising, superior to Odin, and his fellow deities, who puts an end to the prevailing confusion, and renews the world, making it more beautiful

\* Edda, vol. 2. Northern Antiq. p. 159, & infra.

† Edda.

‡ Ancient poem of the Voluspa, ibid. p. 174.

§ Ancient poem of the Voluspa, Northern Antiq. vol. 2. p. 178.

than it was before, and establishes it to all eternity : then the subaltern gods arise again to govern under the supreme Deity, and the souls of heroes and just men to inhabit the new earth.

The northern philosophers, as we have seen, made two heavens for their heroes, and two hells for those that were profligate and wicked. The first of these endured but for a time, and the last to all eternity ; for after the soul of an hero left his body, it went directly to the palace of Odin or Valhall, where they enjoyed their first state of happiness ; but after the destruction of the world, they rose again to people the new earth, where their happiness was to be made perfect, and to endure for ever. So also the souls of the wicked were first precipitated into the Nifheim, or abode of death, where they were to abide until the last day, and, after that, they were cast into Nastrand, a place of eternal punishment.

Having thus given a short view of the ancient religion of the Saxons and Danes, it only remains that we give a brief account of the rites of worship usual amongst those nations, and these may be comprised under four heads, viz. Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving ; Prayers and Supplices ; Offerings and Sacrifices ; Incantations and Rites of Divination.

In regard to the songs composed in honour of the gods, they were doubtless very numerous ; and in these they were distinguished according to their power and rank, by the honourable epithets that were bestowed upon them ; and, as they were high in esteem, those epithets were always more numerable. Odin alone had not less than one hundred and twenty-six different appellations, of which the following may serve as a specimen. " Odin, the Father of the Ages ; the Supercilious ; the Eagle ; the Father of Verses ; Whirlwind ; the Incendiary : he who causes showers of arrows, &c." Thor was distinguished by twelve epithets, of which the most common were, " The Son of Odin, and the Earth." Loke, the evil spirit, was called, " The Father of the Great Serpent ; the Father of Death ; the Adversary ; the Accuser ; the Deceiver of the Gods, &c." Frigga was distinguished by the honourable title of " Queen of the Gods." And Freya was called, " The Goddess of Love ; the Norne, or Fairy, who weeps golden tears ; the Kind and Liberal Goddess \*."

Prayers and supplications formed a great part of the worship of the northern nations. Their prayers were offered up to Odin for success in battle : to Frigga, for successful marriages, and easy child-births ; to Thor, that he might avert the thunder-bolts, and destroy their enemies with them. To Niord, they prayed for favourable voyages, and success in fishing. To Freya, for mild seasons, and large crops of corn ; and to Tyr, for success in duels, &c. They were very particu-

\* Northern Antiquities, vol. 2. p. 189, 190.

lar in addressing their prayers, as they ought, and boasted of their knowledge of the attributes and functions of the gods, so that they were well acquainted to what deity to make their applications in order to obtain success; but, if the gods refused to grant their requests, they would frequently express their dissatisfaction by shooting arrows or throwing darts towards heaven\*.

Sacrifices.

Their sacrifices were numerous; for it was usual with them to offer victims to the particular gods they addressed, previously to their undertaking any great exploit; and, at this time, after the victim was chosen, it was conducted towards the altar, where the sacred fire was kept burning night and day. The altar was surrounded with all sorts of vessels, as well of iron as of brass, with one larger than the rest to receive the victim's blood. If their sacrifice consisted of animals, the victim was conducted quickly to the altar, and there slain; when part of the flesh was burned, and the rest properly prepared, it was set before the assembly, who feasted thereon, not excepting the flesh of horses; and the nobility partook of this feast as well as the common people. But when important occasions seemed to require more noble victims, their altars streamed with the blood of human beings. These unfortunate wretches were either knocked on the head as they lay upon a great stone, prepared for that purpose, or else were bled to death, to give the priests an opportunity of making his observations upon the flowing of the blood; and, according to its impetuosity, they usually judged of the success of the enterprise they were about to undertake. The body was next opened, and the entrails examined, from which fresh presages were drawn. The bodies were afterwards either burnt upon the altar, or hung up in the sacred groves. At other times, they performed their sacrifices in a different manner; for near the temple was a deep well, into which the victim was plunged headlong: this was chiefly done in honour of Gaya, or the Earth; and, if the body sunk at once to the bottom, it was esteemed a sure proof of its being agreeable to the goddess; but if, on the contrary, it swam at top, it was a sign that she refused it, and it was then hung up in the Holy Forest. In whatever manner the victim was slain, the priest always pronounced certain words, as, "I devote thee to Odin;—I send thee to Odin;"—or, "I devote thee for a good harvest; for a return of a fruitful season." Their sacrifices were always concluded with feasting and rejoicing, and then in particular they drank large draughts of beer or ale to the honour of the gods, and at each draught put up some prayer, or made some vow. To Odin, they would usually sacrificed horses, dogs, falcons, and sometimes cocks, or a fat bull. To Thor also fat oxen and horses; and, to Frigga, the largest hog they could procure. When they meant to sacrifice men, the victims were

\* Olai Magni Hist. l. 3, c. 9.

usually

usually chosen from criminals, captives, or slaves; but on particular emergencies the first nobility, nay, even their kings were not spared; for they thought the more noble the victim was, the sooner the gods would listen to their prayers, and grant them, in proportion, a larger share of their favour\*.

No people were more addicted to soothsaying and divination than the ancient Saxons and Danes; for besides those common methods made use of by other nations in general, they had many peculiar to themselves. Their oracles were not less famous, nor less revered, than those of Greece and Italy: they paid also the greatest regard to diviners, whether male or female, but more particularly to the latter; these pretended to give answers by familiar spirits, or by conjuring up the spirits of the departed people. This art they pretended to have learned from Odin, who used frequently to consult the spirits of the dead to know what passed in remote countries. These secrets the bards pretended to possess; and boasted that they could call the dead from their gloomy abodes by certain magic verses, and by the formation of Runic letters or characters†.

Divinations of  
the Danes.

In the very early times it is said, that the northern nations had no temples for their gods, thinking, perhaps, that it might be offensive to the deities to pretend to enclose them within the circuit of walls, so that their religious worship was performed in the sacred groves, or within large circles of rude stones. In the latter times, however, they proceeded to imitate other idolatrous nations, and erected temples, some of which were astonishingly magnificent; but none of them were more famous than that which was built at Upsal in Sweden, which was covered on all sides with gold, and a chain of the same metal ran round the roof, the circumference of which was not less than nine hundred ells. Every temple had a private chapel, which was regarded as the most holy place, where, on a kind of altar, the images of their deities were set up; and round which the victims, doomed to be sacrificed, were ranged in order. Another altar was also opposite to this, plated with iron, that it might receive no damage from the holy fire which was kept burning there perpetually: on this altar was placed a brazen vase for the reception of the blood of the victims, and beside it stood a brush for sprinkling the blood upon the by-standers: not far off hung a silver ring besmeared with blood, which was to be held in the hand of a person who was about to take an oath‡. At the temple of Upsal there was also a deep well, into which they cast the victims.

Temples of the  
Danes and Sax-  
ons.

\* Mallet, chap. 7.

† Tacit. de Morib. Germ. Keyser, p. 59. Mallet, vol. i. c. 7.

‡ Thus Ælfred, when he had overcome the Danes, A. D. 876, caused them to swear upon their holy bracelet, which oath

they had never taken to any foreign king or nation before, says Afferius; but the event proved, that they regarded this solemn oath no more than any they had sworn before without this ceremony. Vid. page 29 of this vol.

Images of the  
Saxon and Dan-  
ish gods.

At the same time that the northern nations followed the example of other pagan people in erecting temples to their gods, they also proceeded further to imitate them, and set up their images therein; for in the famous temple of Upsal, the three superior deities were represented, and each of them was characterized by some particular symbol; Odin was seated on a throne compleatly armed, holding a sword in his right hand. Thor stood at the left hand of Odin with a crown upon his head, a scepter in one hand, and a club in the other\*. Frigga stood at the left hand of Thor; she was represented as an hermaphrodite, and held a bow in one hand, and a sword in the other. The other gods were depicted with their various attributes. Also, after the arrival of the Saxons in England, they erected many temples, which were filled with the images of their gods; but they were destroyed upon their conversion to Christianity †.

Festivals ob-  
served by the  
Danes and Sax-  
ons.

There were three great religious festivals celebrated in the course of the year by the ancient northern nations. The first was held at the winter solstice; and the night on which it was observed was called Mother Night, both on account of the festival, and of its being the beginning of the new year with those nations: this feast was named Juul, a name by which the Christian festival of Christmas (observed about the same season of the year) was afterwards called, and by which it is known to this day in many parts of Scotland, and some parts of England: the heathen Juul was celebrated in honour of the god Thor, or the Sun, in order to obtain a propitious year, and fruitful seasons. Sacrifices, feasting, dances, nocturnal assemblies, and every possible demonstration of a most dissolute joy were then authorized by the general usage. The second festival, which was instituted in honour of the Earth, or of the goddesses Gaya or Frigga, was celebrated in the first quarter of the first moon in the year. The third, and most considerable of them all, was held in the beginning of the spring, in honour of the god Odin, when they welcomed the return of that pleasant season, and especially prayed to obtain of the god of battles success in their projected warlike expeditions. Besides these three great festivals, they had many others in honour of the inferior deities, and they were often multiplied on occasion of any very fortunate events ‡.

\* Sometimes he was painted in a chariot drawn by two he goats, and his head encircled with a crown of stars. Mallet, vol. p. 130.

† Bede, Ecc. Hist. l. 2. c. 13.

‡ Mallet, chap. 7. &c.



## C H R O N I C L E

O F

## E N G L A N D.

## P A R T III.

A DISSERTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT, LAWS, MANNERS, HABITS, ECT. OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS, FROM THE END OF THE HEPTARCHY TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST, A. D. 1066.

## C H A P. I.

*Government, Constitution, and Laws, of the Anglo-Saxons.*

IN order to make this chapter the more conspicuous, we broke off, in the former volume, at the arrival of the Saxons in Britain, only mentioning that the conquered lands, which were shared amongst those warriors, were, by them, parcelled out among their slaves and dependants, reserving to themselves such a share of the produce of those lands so divided, as they thought proper to demand. This manner of proceeding naturally gave occasion to the well known division of their lands into Bockland and Folcland, as it was afterwards termed\*.

Bockland was the name given to all those lands that were first allotted to the original proprietors by whom such estates were held, free from every kind of incumbrance or service whatever, except the three following, which were indispensably necessary for the general preservation of the whole community, viz. Serving in the wars; repairing bridges; building and fortifying castles. These estates were absolutely the conquerors own, and perfectly at their disposal, so that they might, at their pleasure, either give them away to others in whole

\* See the first volume of this Chronicle, part 5, chap. 1. page 313, 314.

or in part, or retain them for their heirs and descendants; and from those persons alone, who were possessed of such estates, were the magistrates chosen, from the lowest to the highest order\*. This original estate, or Bockland, was usually divided into two parts, distinguished by the names of Inland and Outland; the former included such part of the estate as lay contiguous to the proprietor's mansion, and was generally occupied by himself, and cultivated by his own dependants and slaves, for the immediate support of himself and his family. The latter, or Outland, which is the same as Fockland, was such part of the estate as lay more remote from the dwelling house of the proprietor; and this was also divided into two parts, one of which was let out to a sort of tenants, or conditional occupiers of land, upon such terms, and for such a time, as the lord of the estate should please. These tenants were called by the Anglo-Saxons, Ceorls or Churls, and, perhaps, besides the exaction their lord might make of such a part as he thought proper of the produce of the lands, held by the Ceorls, for the support of his own hospitality, they were obliged to give him personal marks of their dependance. The other part of the Outland was, if the estate of the proprietor was very considerable, subdivided into separate portions, according to their size. These divisions, which were called Benefices, were bestowed by the proprietor upon his faithful companions and followers, for such a length of time as the donor should think proper to limit, or, if he pleased, for ever. These Benefices, or, as they were afterwards called Thane Lands, were freely bestowed upon such followers, and were to be held of them as a reward for their service, and voluntary attendance, without any painful restraint, or obligation whatever, those three only mentioned above, of attending in the wars, repairing bridges, and building and defending the castles; and not only the proprietor of the estate himself was subject to these obligations, but even the clergy, for a long time, were not excepted; and such services were by all agreed upon to be as indispensably necessary for their own preservation, as it was for that of the king himself.

Privileges of every freeholder, and his family.

Every free-born Anglo-Saxon, or proprietor of land, presided as judge over his own slaves, his tenants, and his immediate dependants. He became responsible for every offence committed by any one of the members of his family, and was obliged to pay the fines incurred by such offence †. At their first settling in Britain, every freeholder not only decided all matters of dispute which arose in his own family, but had also authority to punish the offenders in what manner he pleased, and

\* Squire on the English Constitution, p. 109.

† Ibid. p. 135, &c.

‡ So also, if a stranger staid above three days and three nights in any family, the

master of that family acquired the same authority over him, because he became, in like manner, responsible for his conduct. Willkin's Leg. Saxon. p. 9.

in some cases, to put them to death. But soon after their conversion to Christianity, this great authority which the master of a family possessed, was reduced to narrower limits; for the life of a man, however abject his condition might be, was justly considered as of too much value to be left to the mercy of an individual.

In order to preserve peace and unity amongst masters of families <sup>Tything-Courts.</sup> themselves, ten families were formed into a society called a Tything Freeburgh or Decennary, over which a magistrate presided called Borsholder or Tything-man\*. No freeman whatever could claim the protection of the law, unless he were a member of the Tything in which himself and his family resided; but, on the contrary, such a man was looked upon as an alien and vagabond. A good character was the absolute requisite that each man should possess at his admittance as member of the Tything, for each member was pledge for his fellow, and the whole community were sureties to the king for the good behaviour of all its members: this made them very cautious not to admit suspected persons into their societies. These Tythings formed within themselves a little commonwealth, and they chose for their Borsholder or Chief, one of the most respectable of the members, and who was most esteemed for his wisdom and experience. The Borsholder had authority to call all the members together, who, being assembled, constituted a court of justice, in which the Borsholder presided, to see the sentence of the court put into execution. In this assembly all little disputes, and matters of private controversy amongst themselves, were decided; but, in critical affairs, where the parties were not willing to abide by the sentence of this court, the cause was referred to the next superior court. In these assemblies, the arms belonging to the members of the Tything were frequently produced and examined; new members were admitted, and testimonials given to such as were obliged to remove from this Tything to another; because, as every Tything was answerable for the conduct of its members to the public, none could be esteemed a member of a Tything where he did not reside, as he could not be under the inspection of those who were answerable for his good behaviour. When any member of a Tything committed any crime, and made his escape, the Tything where he resided was allowed thirty-one days to pursue him; but if, at the end of that time, the criminal could not be produced, the Borshold, and two more of the most respectable members of that body, with the Borsholder, and two more members from three neighbouring Tythings, making in all twelve responsible men, were to take oath before a superior magistrate, that it was not the fault of the Tything to which the criminal belonged that he had escaped, nor

\* Sometimes he was called Alderman of the Tything, but his most common name was Borsholder, from the Saxon words **Boph**, a Surety, and **Aloep**, a Head or Chief. Spelman Gloss in voce.

had any one of its members connived at his escape, but that they had all used their utmost endeavours to bring him to justice: but if the evidence of their innocence was not perfectly clear, the Tything was obliged to pay the mulct proscribed by the law for the offence that had been committed. However, in after times, this law was made easier; for the oath of all the members of the Tything only, to which the offender had belonged, was received as a sufficient exculpation; but at the same time, they were obliged also to swear that they would give him up to justice as soon as he could be apprehended by them\*. A great union generally subsisted amongst all the members of a Tything, who were strongly attached to each others interests, and frequently united by the ties of consanguinity; they commonly fought together in one band, and often eat together in time of peace; each revenged the injury done to his fellow member as if it was done to himself; they each contributed to repair the loss which any member might have sustained by fire, or by any other dreadful calamity; if any one became poor, he was supported by the rest of the community; all the members attended the funerals, marriages, and festivals of the neighbourhood; if any quarrel happened at the common festivals of the society, a severe fine was exacted of the aggressor; and, lastly, if any one of the members forfeited his privileges by his bad conduct, he was solemnly expelled from the community, which was a lasting disgrace, and total loss of his character, for, from that moment, he was considered as an outlaw and a vagabond, and treated with universal contempt†.

Voluntary societies formed upon the plan of Tythings.

The nobility and clergy were exempted from being members of any Tything, as that would have implied a mistrust of their good behaviour, unbecoming their dignity and character; yet the apparent advantages that arose from this excellent institution, induced them to enter into voluntary associations, in every respect resembling those of the Tything, excepting only that the one was the result of choice, the other of necessity. Each of these societies, whether of Thanets, bishops, abbots, or priests, had a chief or head, whose power was exactly similar to that of the Borholder; and most of them had common tables, at which the members often feasted together: when a quarrel happened at their feasts, the aggressor was obliged to pay the same fine as would have been exacted of a member of a Tything for the same offence. Several of their fines were paid in money or malt, un-

\* Wilkin's Leg. Sax. p. 201, 202, &c.

† The advantages arising from this prudent, political regulation, were such, that in the days of Ælfred the Great, when it was put in full execution, the kingdom was kept in such order, and profound tranquil-

lity, that a traveller had nothing to apprehend; and if, by accident, he might loose a large sum of money over-night, he was sure of finding it the next morning, or, indeed, a month after, entire and untouched. Ingulph. Hist.

doubtedly

doubtedly with a view to furnish mead and ale for their public entertainments\*.

In order to settle such disputes as were of too high consequence to be determined by the members of the Tything, or any altercation between the members of the different Tythings, a court, called the Hundred Court, was instituted. Every Hundred contained ten Tythings; and all the members of each Tything were also members of the Hundred Court, and obliged to attend its meetings under pain of a severe fine. This Court met once a month, and the magistrate who presided in it was called the Hundredary. This officer, who was usually a Thane or nobleman residing in the Hundred, was chosen by the suffrages of the members of the Court, and his post was productive of both honour and profit†: to him it belonged to appoint the times and places for the meeting of the Hundred Court, to inspect the arms belonging to the Hundred, and to put its sentences in force, &c. and for the execution of these offices, one third of the fines imposed by this court, belonged to him, with a certain quantity of corn from each member, for the maintenance of his dogs, which were kept to destroy wolves, foxes, and other destructive animals. This officer was not only the civil magistrate in time of peace, but the captain or leader of the members of his Hundred in time of war. All the members, when they met at the court, came armed, and, before they proceeded to business, constantly touched the Hundredary's spear with the points of their own, as a token of their acknowledgment of his authority, and their willingness to fight under his command‡. The archdeacon, and sometimes the bishop, presided with the Hundredary, when matters both civil and ecclesiastical were regulated, and an inquiry was made into the states of the several Tythings. The authority of this court did not extend so far as to condemn any person to death or slavery; and if any man thought himself injured by the decision of the members, he had full liberty to appeal to the next superior court§. Every thing in this court was determined by the votes of the members, and the Hundredary had only the right to take the votes, and pronounce sentence accordingly. Sales of land, and other important affairs relative to the members of the same Hundred, were published and confirmed publicly in the Hundred Court||.

Nor was the government of towns and cities, at this time, much unlike the government of the Hundreds. The chief magistrate, in such places, was usually called the Alderman or Town-grieve; or, if

\* Dr. Hickes hath published the rules that the members of these societies bound themselves to observe. Hickesii Dissertatio Epist. p. 18.---22; and various laws were made respecting these voluntary associations. Johnson's Canons, A. D. 725. sub

fin. Spelman, Concil. Brit. p. 407. 448. 495.

† Spelman Gloss. in voc.

‡ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 203.

§ Du Cange Gloss. in voc. Centenarii.

|| Dugdale Origines Juridicales, p. 27.

they were sea-ports, the Port-grieve: his authority was much the same in his town or city with that of the Hundredary in his Hundred. The chief court was called Burgemote or Folcmote, which was a meeting of all the burgesses, in order to regulate the affairs of the community, and settle disputes between the several members. Their meetings were usually monthly; but, upon any extraordinary emergency, the Alderman had authority to call a court by the sound of the mot-bell\*.

**Trything Courts** Three, four, or sometimes more Hundreds, formed that division of a shire or county as was called a Trything, and, in some places, a Lath. Every Trything had also a court of justice, the next in order above the Hundred Court, and the magistrate who presided at this Court, was called the Trything-man, or Lath-grieve. The Court was composed of the several members of the Hundred Courts within the limits of the Trything, and herein were tried the appeals from the Hundred Court, and the cause of differences settled between the members of separate Hundreds. Here also sales of estates, last wills, and other important transactions, were published and confirmed †.

**County Courts  
or Shiregemotes**

The next court was the County Court, which was of great importance and authority amongst the Anglo-Saxons, and may, indeed, be styled a kind of little parliament, in which a great variety of consequential business, as well civil as ecclesiastical, was transacted. In this court the alderman, or earl of the shire, together with the bishop, shiregrieve, and the law-men, their assessors, presided; and the members were composed of a general assembly of all the freeholders within the county or shire wherein the court was held, and from thence it was called the Shiregemote. The alderman or chief magistrate, who presided at this court, was the earl of the shire, a person of the greatest dignity and power amongst the Anglo-Saxons, under the king himself. This office, therefore, was usually given to the Thanes of the most extensive estates, and most ancient families. They possessed both the civil and military government of their shires or counties, and assumed the title of sub-king and prince in subscribing to charters, and other deeds ‡. In the time of war, the alderman conducted all the military members of his shire to the battle, and was called Heretoge, which signifies a general, or commander of an army. In the most ancient period of the Anglo-Saxon government, these great officers were appointed by the king, but, in latter times, they were elected by the freeholders in their Shiregemote, or county court §. In order to support their dignity with becoming state, they were allowed certain lands, distinguished by the names of Earls Land, and had also a right to one-third of all the fines imposed within their shires, besides other perqui-

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 204.

† Ibid. &c.

‡ Selden's Tit. Hon. p. 502.

§ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 205.

sites \*. Their office was not hereditary originally, nor indeed always for life; because anciently it depended upon the good-will of the king, or their own unexceptionable behaviour †: but, in the latter times, the sons of the aldermen frequently succeeded their fathers in their offices, which might be rather owing to the great power and influence of some few families, than any formal change in the constitution itself ‡.

The Shiregerieve, who assisted the alderman at the county courts, and indeed when his lord was absent supplied his place, was a man elected to that post from his knowledge in the laws and superior learning; for although the alderman was constantly chosen from the most distinguished personages of the shire, yet in general the nobility were much more addicted to arms than to letters, and far better soldiers than lawyers: many of them also had offices at court that frequently required their presence, which, together with other engagements, might occasion them often to be absent from the county courts. To remedy these inconveniencies, an officer was chosen in every shire, called the Shiregerieve, who was the alderman's assessor in judgment, and his chief minister in the discharge of every part of his duty §. In the more early times, the Shiregerieve was chosen by the king, but towards the conclusion of the Saxon government, he was elected by the freeholders in the county court ||.

The Shiregerieve, who he was,

Other assistants to the alderman were the Reed-boran or lahmén ¶, or lawyers, who were brought up in the study of the written law, and after they had passed an examination as to the knowledge of their profession, they were appointed assessors to the aldermen, shiregerieves and hundredaries, and others acted as advocates and pleaders at the bar \*\*. In ancient times, when few people had the knowledge of letters, three of these lahmén were thought sufficient to assist at the judgments of the county court; but as learning increased, their number was augmented first to seven, and afterwards to twelve ††. These assessors took a solemn oath faithfully to perform all the duties of their office, and neither suffer an innocent man to be condemned, nor an offender to escape ‡‡. Some have attributed the institution of lahmén, as assessors, to Ælfred the Great; but there is sufficient evidence of their greater antiquity §§.

La hmén, or lawyers.

The meeting of the Shiregemote was opened by a discourse from the bishop, who explained from the scriptures and cannon laws, the duties of the members, as good Christians: after that, the alderman,

Manner of conducting business in the Shiregemote.

\* Spel. Gloss. p. 141, 142.

† Ibid.

‡ Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 244.

§ Spel. Gloss. in voc. Grafo.

|| Wilkin Leg. Sax. p. 203.

¶ Ibid. 205.

\*\* Hicetii Distr. Epist. p. 34.

†† Du Cange Gloss. & Wilkin Leg. ut

sup.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 177.

§§ Vide Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p.

246.

or his assistant; spoke concerning the laws of the land, and explained the duties of good subjects and citizens. These preambles being finished, they proceeded to execute the business brought before them, determining first the causes of the church; next the pleas of the crown; and, lastly, the controversies of private parties\*. Every cause (being first explained and understood by the members of the court, and the evidence on either side duly delivered) was determined by the votes of the whole assembly: these votes were collected by the laihmen, who drew up, and pronounced the sentence†. Also, when any material law question arose in the course of a trial, such question was answered by the laihmen from the dome-boc, or book of laws, which was always lying before them in the court‡. A great variety of business was transacted at the Shiregemote, relative to sales of land, and donations to the church; the publication and confirmation of charters; besides the trials of civil and criminal causes§.

The Folcmote  
an assistant court  
to the Shirege-  
mote.

The Shiregemote often continued for several days, and was usually called twice in the year; but as all the business of the county could not conveniently be transacted at these times, a smaller, or assistant court, was held every fourth week by the Shiregerieve, in order to determine such causes as had been left untried in the Shiregemote. These smaller county courts are often distinguished by the name of Folcmotes, and as only inferior causes were here tried, none were obliged to attend them but the shiregerieve, the law men, and those who had immediate business, as the parties and the witnesses in the causes to be tried||.

The Witten-  
gemote or Parli-  
ament.

The next, and highest court, was called the Wittenagemot, in which was lodged the whole legislative power of the community, and the supreme authority over all persons, and in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil. By the authority of this court alone, ancient customs were reformed, old laws amended or repealed, and new statutes enacted: here lay all appeals from the determinations of each county; and here such causes were finally determined. No tax could be levied upon any member of the community without the previous consent and approbation of this great assembly, by whose authority the proportion of the assessment, as well as the manner of the collection, was determined. Here also war was declared against foreign powers, or peace established; public quarrels revenged, and reparation made to the injured nation. In this assembly also, the principal ecclesiastical affairs were transacted; bishops appointed, or at least approved; and both them and aldermen, with other great officers of the nation, were herein censured for neglect of duty, or even deposed, if their of-

\* Spelman's Remains.

† Hicckesii Dissert. Epist. p. 31, 32.

‡ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 48.

§ Hicckesii Dissert. p. 80.

|| Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 50.



fence was very great and notorious; so that the Wittenagemot, in which all the wisdom and power of the state was supposed to be collected, was justly esteemed its best guide and guardian against all external or internal grievances whatever\*. During the continuation of the Heptarchy, there were as many of these assemblies as there were kingdoms; but as soon as those kingdoms were united into one monarchy, all the Wittenagemots were formed into one great assembly, or Mickle-mot, as it is often called.

The chief personage who presided at these courts was called the Cyning or king, whose post was the most honourable as well as the most powerful in the kingdom. It is indeed true, that when our Saxon ancestors first quitted Germany, and landed in Britain, under the conduct of Hengist, that chieftain only bore the title of Heretoge, or general; and his office, in his native country, as we have seen before, was temporary, and to continue only so long as the cause of his election subsisted; but on their arrival in Britain, the resistance they met with was so vigorous, and of such continuance, that they were constantly obliged to be prepared to defend their possessions, so that the office of the general could not be vacated; and, at last, those leaders, if not by the desire, at least with the consent of their followers, assumed the honourable title of Cyning or king†. It is not, however, in the least likely that the leader obtained, with this title, any more authority over his followers than what he formerly had, or that this step made any material alteration in their original constitution. The duties of the king, in the light he was afterwards considered, were principally these two, viz. in time of war to conduct his subjects to the field, and, in time of peace, to administer justice to them. In regard to the first, when we consider the Saxons at, and shortly after, their establishment in Britain, and reflect upon their situation, obliged at all times to be prepared to defend with force what by force they had won, we may reasonably imagine, that the personal attendance of their king, in time of war, must have been considered as an indispensable duty, so that it was long thought to be improper to place a king upon the throne who was not a warrior; for which reason, many who were well entitled to the crown, were excluded on account of their age or sex. Some of the Anglo-Saxon kings, however, when they were in possession of the government, manifested a sluggish and unwarlike disposition; and, as they either could not, or would not, attend the war personally, they were at last allowed a substitute, who was called the Cynings-hold, or king's lieutenant, and his authority extended over all the heretoges or leaders of the several counties of the king's dominions‡. The second duty of the king was the administration of justice. That the Anglo-Saxon monarchs were considered

The Anglo-Saxon king, and his offices.

\* Squire on the Eng. Const. p. 186--- 197.

† Ibid. p. 194.

‡ Ibid. p. 213, in a note.

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‡ Ibid. p. 213, in a note.

as the chief judges in their respective kingdoms, and often administered justice personally, cannot be contradicted; and indeed they were bound to do it by their coronation oath. *Ælfred the Great*, in particular, frequently employed great part of his time in hearing causes that were brought before him, and also appeals from the sentence of inferior judges, which he often changed, and sometimes severely reprimanded the judges for their ignorance, commanding them either to make themselves perfect in the study of the law, or resign their offices to such as were better qualified \*. If he found their wrong judgments proceeded from malice or corruption, he punished them with the greatest severity †. To assist the king in the performance of this part of his royal office, he was constantly attended by a council formerly made up of his followers or Thanes, and the governors of the several counties; but after the establishment of Christianity, to these were added the bishops and others of the dignified clergy, whose wisdom and superior abilities pointed them out as the most proper men to be counsellors of state ‡. To render the attendance of these counsellors more convenient to them, *Ælfred* divided them into three equal parts, and they succeeded each other monthly §. But after the establishment of the monarchy in England, this part of the royal office became excessively burthen some to the king, by the prodigious number of appeals from every part of the kingdom, and but few of them had either sufficient knowledge, industry, or, indeed, leisure to go through it in person. Several laws were therefore made to prevent unnecessary appeals to the king; and a chief justiciary was appointed to preside in the king's court to perform the judicial part of this office whilst he was absent, or otherwise employed ||. It is not indeed quite certain when this great officer was first commissioned: it is, however, generally thought to have been some time during the tenth century. *Æthelstan*, a very potent Thane, in the reign of king *Æthelstan*, was advanced to this high office (and perhaps he was the first that enjoyed it) and, at the same time, the title of half-king was conferred on him, because he performed one half of the king's office, which consisted in the administration of justice. He was succeeded by his son *Aylwin*, who bore a more modest title, viz. Alderman of all England ¶. After the institution of this office, which long continued to be the highest in the state, the kings, by degrees, left the whole management of this part of their duty to their chief justiciaries, and other judges.

\* *Affer. in Vita Ælfredi.*

† *Le Miroir de Justices*, lib. 5. declares, that *Ælfred* condemned to death no less than forty-two judges, whom he discovered to be corrupt and unjust.

‡ *Squire*, p. 181 & seq.

§ *Affer. Vit. Ælf.*

|| *Wilkins Leg. Sax.* p. 77. 250. *Spel. Gloss. in voce Justiciarius.*

¶ *Selden Tit. Hon.* p. 505.

The Anglo-Saxon king was far from being an absolute monarch, for, on the contrary, his power and prerogatives were limited by the laws and customs of his country. They could neither make laws, or impose taxes, without the advice and consent of the Wittenagemot, or great council of the nation; and although they could upon any sudden invasion, rebellion, or such emergency, put themselves at the head of their troops, by their own authority, to preserve the public safety, yet they had not the power to make a formal declaration of war against any neighbouring people without the consent of the grand council, in which also alone was invested the power of proclaiming peace\*. One of the chief privileges annexed to the crown was, the authority invested in the king to portion out conquered lands, and divide the spoils taken from the enemy; but yet they could, by no means, assert this prerogative too greatly in their own favour, nor keep more than one-third of such lands or spoils to themselves, without incurring the indignation of their troops†. In the times of paganism, the king could not punish any of his soldiers for desertion, or any other offence, this being the office of the priests alone; but upon the establishment of Christianity, the exercise of military discipline seems to have become one of the royal prerogatives‡. The king (that he might not deprive any injured person of his right) had no power to remit the fines imposed upon any criminal by a court of justice; but he possessed the privilege of changing a capital into a pecuniary punishment§. In the early stages of the Anglo-Saxon government, the nomination of the civil and military officers appears to have been one of the royal prerogatives; but this power was afterwards taken from the king, and vested in the great council, though at what time, or upon what occasion, cannot clearly be determined. At the first introduction of Christianity, the Anglo-Saxon kings seem to have left to the clergy the principal government of the ecclesiastical affairs, and the choice of persons to fill the offices of the church; but by degrees it was found necessary, for the peace and good government of the state, that the king should interfere more directly in the promotion of the clergy, and be careful that the ecclesiastical offices should be filled by men who were well affected to government. The king first obtained a right of approving, and, at length, of appointing all the dignitaries of the church||. Hereditary titles, unconnected with offices, were unknown among the Anglo-Saxons; the granting such titles, therefore, could not be any part of the king's prerogative. The authority of re-

Prerogatives of  
the king.

\* Squire on Eng. Confit. p. 186.

† Malmibury says, that one of the chief causes of Harold's ruin was, his retaining to himself a larger proportion of the Danish and Norwegian spoils than was customary; by which means he so much offended

his army, that a great part of them deserted from him as he marched against the conqueror. Malmib. lib. 2. c. 13.

‡ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 23.

§ Ibid. p. 36. 201.

|| Spel. Concl. p. 387.

gulating

gulating the public coin was vested in the Wittenagemot, and the king might not enhance or debase its value without the consent of that council. The privilege of coining money was not confined to the king alone, but was granted to the archbishop, bishops, and chief towns\*. The king had authority, upon all extraordinary occasions, to convene the Wittenagemot, and to appoint the time and place of its meeting. In this assembly he also presided, and proposed the subjects of deliberation to the members, pronounced the public determination, and was afterwards entrusted with the execution thereof. He had also the honour of having his name set first to all acts of state. It is hardly worth the labour of being more particular in the description of the prerogatives of the Anglo-Saxon kings, of which those above-mentioned are evidently the principal, and from them it may plainly be seen to what narrow limits they were circumscribed †.

The revenues  
of the kings.

The revenue of the Anglo-Saxon kings, like those of other great men, consisted chiefly in their own patrimonial estates, or that share of the conquered lands, which, at the first division, became their due; for every original possessor of land, as he obtained it by the point of the sword, received it as his own sole property, without being subject to any payments to the king, or other magistrates, or, indeed, any service, excepting those three indispensable duties of fighting to defend the country, keeping the highways and bridges in repair, and in fortifying castles. In order, therefore, the better to support the dignity of the king, it was found necessary, in every state, to assign a certain portion of lands, with their slaves, cattle, houses, &c. the rents of which were annually to be paid to him; and upon his accession to the throne, he was put in possession of these lands, which, however, he had no power to alienate without the consent of the Wittenagemot; for such lands, strictly speaking, did not belong to the king, but to the crown. Out of the produce of these crown lands, and their own estates, which were usually cultivated by slaves and Ceorls, the Anglo-Saxon monarchs supported their household ‡. The next source, from which the king derived his wealth, was the portion of all the fines and mulcts imposed on criminals by the courts of justice within his dominion; in some cases, one-half, but generally one-third of such mulct became his due; and the profits arising from hence must have been very considerable at that time, when the punishment for almost every offence was the payment of certain sums of money proportioned to the crime §. These were the great branches of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs; but besides these, some profits, and those

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. pag. 59.

† Squire on the English Constitution, p. 219.

‡ Ibid. p. 219.

§ Wilkins Leg. Sax.

not very inconsiderable, were derived from foreign and domestic trade \*.

It is true, that under the oppressive rule of the Danish kings, the tax called Dane-geld, became one of the chief branches of the royal revenue. This tax, which seems to have been first imposed by the consent of the Wittenagemot, A. D. 991, was intended either to bribe the Danes to desist from their depredations, and leave the country, or to pay a considerable body of troops to defend the coasts against them. At first, it consisted of one Saxon shilling upon every hide of land in the kingdom †; but soon after it was raised to two, and at last to seven shillings; and it continued to be levied even after the original occasion of imposing it had ceased. Certain it is, that whilst the Danes were continually invading the land, Æthelred, or his son, could derive no great profit from this tax, the whole being laid out in bribing the Danes, or paying the soldiers who fought against them. But when the Danish kings succeeded to the throne, and peace was established, this enormous tax must have filled their coffers. It was collected with such severity in the reign of king Cnut, A. D. 1018, that it amounted to the prodigious sum of seventy-one thousand Saxon pounds, besides the sum of eleven thousand of the same pounds which was exacted of the citizens of London ‡. It appears, however, that this tax was too great to be paid by the distressed inhabitants of England in one year, so that those who were not able to produce the money lost their lands and possessions §. This tax was afterwards reduced to four shillings on each hide, at which rate it continued until it was finally abolished.

Having thus shewn the importance of the great council, or Wittenagemot, and the dignity and offices of the king, or the chief magistrate who presided in them, we shall now proceed to examine the members of this great assembly. All archbishops, bishops, abbots, presbyters, aldermen, heretoges, shiregerieves, domesmen, or judges, were, by virtue of their offices, and on account of their wisdom and knowledge of the laws, members of the Wittenagemot: as also was every proprietor of land within the kingdom, whether of the clergy or the laity, if he was arrived at an approved age, and had not forfeited his title by any misdemeanor. For the Wittenagemot was nothing else than a collection of all the members of the several Shiregemots of that particular state or kingdom where the assemblies were held. It is true, indeed, that many, from possessing greater quantities of land, from the number of their dependants, or their superior valour and wisdom,

\* A part of the profits of all commodities, bought or sold, was payable to the king, when the price of such commodities amounted to more than twenty-pence. See chap. 5. of this part of the Chronicle.

† There were 243,600 hides of land in England; this tax, at one shilling on each

hide, raised 12,180 Saxon pounds, equal in quantity of silver to 36,540 pounds sterling, and in efficacy to more than 360,000 pounds of our present money.

‡ Chron. Sax. sub an. 1018.

§ Leland's Collect. vol. 1. p. 11.

might, perhaps, have more influence in these assemblies than those who were not endowed with such extraordinary qualifications \*.

**Ceorls and bur-  
gesles not  
members of the  
Wittenagemot.** It is generally acknowledged, that the Ceorls, and others who possessed no land of their own, but farmed such as belonged to others, were not looked upon as constituent members of the Wittenagemot, and, consequently, had no share in the administration of public affairs: it is also thought, that the inhabitants of trading towns were represented by their aldermen or portrieve. However, it may be reasonably supposed, that such Ceorls or burgesles as dwelt near the place where the Wittenagemot was held, might attend as interested spectators, and intimate their satisfaction, when the resolves of the council were agreeable to them, by shouts of applause †.

**Meetings of the  
Wittenagemot.** As the members of the Wittenagemot were very numerous, especially after the union of the Heptarchy, such assemblies were usually held in a large open field, and most commonly by the side of a river for the conveniency of water. The appointing the time and place for these assemblies belonged to the king, who also, when they were met, proposed to them the subjects of debate which had been previously determined upon between him and his council ‡; and such a regulation as this was very necessary in so large an assembly, who were certainly more fit to determine such affairs as were laid before them, and well explained, than to propose the subjects of dispute themselves. The Anglo-Saxons, whilst they continued in their idolatrous worship, had, as was customary in Germany, stated times for the meeting of the Wittenagemot, which being well known to all the members, they usually came thither without any particular summonses.

**Stated times  
for the assem-  
blies to meet.** After their conversion to Christianity, these assemblies generally met on the three great festivals, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, at whatever place the court happened to reside at that time. It is thought by some authors, and with great show of reason, that as these ordinary meetings of the Wittenagemot were so frequent, they could not be very numerous, composed, perhaps, but of few more than the great men and nobles, who were of the king's court and council; and that, therefore, they acted, on this occasion, rather in their ministerial and judicial, than their legislative capacity: but, on any emergency, when the council and authority of the whole nation was wanted, either to make new laws, impose taxes, or declare war, a more solemn meeting

\* Squire on the Eng. Constitut. p. 174, & Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 265.

† And these seem to be the people recorded in these terms: "Omniq[ue] populo audiente & vidente;" and all the people hearing and looking on. "Aliorumq[ue] fide-

lium infinita multitudo, qui omnes laudaverunt;" a vast crowd of other people, who all applauded. Spel. Concil. p. 350---625.

‡ Squire on the Eng. Constitut. p. 178. & infra.



was called, and every person, who had a right to be present, was summoned\*.

The members of the Wittenagemot enjoyed several privileges, and it was particularly enacted by the laws, that their persons should not be molested whilst they were on their way to the council, or whilst they attended the business of that place; and if any one broke the peace at this time by his unruly behaviour, he was punished severely by a much heavier fine than ordinary†.

The attendance upon the Wittenagemot, during the time of the Heptarchy, could not be so exceedingly inconvenient as it became after the establishment of the monarchy; for, at that time, such as were situated in the more remote parts of the kingdom, and whose original possessions, either through the misfortunes of war, or the increase of their families, were considerably diminished, must have found it very difficult to support themselves, even by their constant application to their domestic labours; but, to be also often obliged to attend the great council, must have been an almost insupportable hardship; to remedy which, as it is thought, about the time of king Ælfred, such communities as were very distant, deputed their borougher, or tything-man, to supply their place in the Wittenagemot, and to represent them there, and to take care of the common concerns in the public debates and determinations. The king, undoubtedly, would hardly object to such delegations, as, by this means, the assembly became less numerous, and, of consequence, more governable‡.

Having seen thus much of the Saxon government, we shall proceed to examine the different classes of people of which the nation was composed. The next person in rank to the crowned head was the eldest son of the king, and presumptive heir to the crown; he was usually honoured with the title of Ætheling, or the Most Noble§; and, after him, were the princes of the royal family, who were distinguished by the title of Clitones, or Illustrious||.

The only nobility amongst the Anglo-Saxons were the Thanes, who were a very numerous body, comprehending all the chief landholders in the kingdom. These, in time of war, formed the flower of the army, and, in time of peace, augmented the splendour of the king's court; and from these all chief officers, either civil or military, were chosen. Such as were not elected to any lucrative office supported themselves by the produce of their own lands, and their consequence and splendour were in proportion to their estate. There were several degrees of these nobility among the Anglo-Saxons; but, at this dif-

\* Such extraordinary meetings seem to be all those great national councils mentioned by our historians, which were called only upon extraordinary occasions; and this may account for the elapse we frequently find of several years between such meetings. Vide

Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 267.

† Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 146.

‡ Squire on the Eng. Const. p. 141,

242, 143.

§ Spelman Gloss. in voc.

|| Ibid.

tance of time, it is impossible to mark out precisely the distinctions between them. The lowest order of Thanes seem to be those distinguished by the name of the Earls, or Aldermans Thane; the next were such as had obtained their title by promotion in the church, or success in trade. The king's Thanes were the most honourable: these seem to have been divided into three classes according to their different degrees of wealth\*. There is not the least shadow of a doubt that these Thanes were originally the friends and companions of Hengist, Cerdic, Ælla, and the rest of the Saxon chiefs, when they left Germany, and founded the kingdoms of the Heptarchy in Britain; and that they were the same with the Comites, or companions, mentioned to have existed among the ancient Germans†.

The Ceorls, or husbandman.

The next class of people, who formed a very numerous body among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, were the Ceorls, or husbandmen; but our antiquaries are somewhat divided in their opinions concerning these people; some affirming that they were, in general, not only completely free themselves, but descendants from freemen, and composed of the original proprietors of land, and their successors; and that all such Ceorls had a positive right to be members of the Wittenagemot‡: but others assert, that they are the same with the Frilazins, or those who had formerly been slaves, but, by purchase, or good behaviour, had obtained their liberty, some of them being slaves, brought over by the Saxons from Germany, and others, natives of the conquered land whom they had enslaved upon their establishment in Britain§; but, by whatever method they obtained their freedom, it is certain that they enjoyed it, and might pursue whatever method of life best suited with their genius or convenience||. However, so great a number of them applied themselves to agriculture, and tillage of land, that Ceorl became the most common title amongst our Anglo-Saxon ancestors for a farmer or husbandman.

\* This may sufficiently appear from the heroots paid to the king at their death. The heroot of a king's Thane, of the first class, was four horses, two saddled, and two unsaddled; four swords, four spears, four shields, and one hundred mancusses of gold. For the king's Thane of the second class was paid two horses, one saddled, and one not, two swords, two spears, two shields, and fifty mancusses of gold; and for the king's Thane, of the last class, was paid one horse saddled, and the Thane's arms. Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 144.

† See volume the first of this work, p. 311.

‡ Vide Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 231 & 263.

§ Squire on the Eng. Constitut. p. 111.

|| Free indeed they were (says Squire) as to their persons, as free as any other members of the community; nor was that small peculium, or share of profit which their industry might acquire, subject to the arbitrary will of any one. What they got by their skill and labour was really their own, and they might dispose of it by will, or in what other manner they pleased. They were, moreover, sometimes entrusted to bear arms for the society under whose protection they lived. These seem to be the sole privileges they were in a capacity of enjoying, for they were obliged to marry within their own order, nor had they as yet any expectation of being admitted as members of the great council. Squire on the Eng. Constitut. p. 110, 111.

The

The Ceorls, however, had great advantages set before them; for if <sup>Advantages that the ceorls might make use of.</sup> one of them, either by the bounty of his lord whose land he farmed, or by his own superior skill and industry, prospered so well as to obtain the property of five hides of land upon which he had a church, a kitchen, a bell-house, and a gate-house, and acquired a seat and an office in the king's court, he was, from that time, esteemed a Thane or nobleman, and entitled to all the privileges belonging thereto\*. If he applied to learning, and attained to priests orders, he also obtained the privileges of a thane, his were-gild was the same, and his testimony had the same weight in a court of justice†. If he applied to trade, and crossed the sea three times in a ship that was his own property, and a cargo of his own, he also obtained the dignity of a thane‡. If his inclination led him to follow a martial employment, he became a sithcund man, or military retainer to some powerful earl or alderman, and was called his hufcorle§. If this ceorle by his good behaviour obtained from his patron either five hydes of land, or the donation of a gilt sword, helmet and breastplate, as a reward for his valour, he was likewise considered as a thane||.

If the ceorls, and the frilazin, were really two distinct classes of people, the latter was without doubt the lowest; these were evidently such as had been slaves, and by some means or other had acquired their liberty¶; "though they were in reality free-men, yet they were not considered as of the same rank and quality with those who had been born free, but yet remained in a more ignoble and dependant condition either on their former masters, or some new patrons\*\*."

The last and lowest order of people amongst the Saxons, were slaves, <sup>Slaves the lowest class of people.</sup> who with their wives and families were the sole property of their masters: of this rank were not only those who were slaves by birth, but often free-men, who fell into that unhappy condition by the fate of war, by bad success in gaming††, by forfeiting their freedom by breach of the laws, or, lastly, by contracting debts too large for them to pay‡‡: These miserable wretches who were very numerous, formed an article of domestic and foreign trade §§, the employments assigned for the slaves were various, some (who were called villani, or villans, from their dwelling at villages belonging to their lords) cultivated the lands, and were transferred with such lands from one owner to another |||;

\* "That is (says Squire in his Essay on the English constitution) he had the privilege of sitting in the wittenagemot or great assembly, and his weregild, or the price of his life, was raised from 200 to 1200 shillings. Squire's essay, p. 116, & Wilkin leg. Sax. p. 70.

† Spelman, concil. p. 405.

‡ Wilkins leg. Sax. p. 71.

§ Spel. Gloss. in voce.

|| Wilkins leg. Sax. p. 71.

¶ Spel. Gloss. in voce. Frilazin.

\*\* Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. 2. p. 230.

†† Vide vol. 1. of this work, pag. 360.

‡‡ Leges Inæ, c. 7.

§§ If the slave was a Christian, he might not be sold to a Jew or Pagan, or if he belonged to the same nation as his master, he might not be sold beyond sea. Leges Inæ, ut sup.

||| Spel. Gloss. in voce. Villanus.

others performed the various domestic offices in the houses of their masters. Some of the king's domestic slaves, as well as those of the nobility, were taught the mechanic arts, which they practised for the benefit of their masters, and indeed most of the mechanics of this age appear to have been composed of the lowest order of the people. If a slave was killed by his master, no mulct was paid, because the master was supposed to be the only loser; but if the slave was killed by another, the master received his price or manbote\*.

The miseries of slavery made lighter.

The miseries of slavery were by degrees made lighter, especially upon the introduction of Christianity amongst the Anglo-Saxons; for by the canons of the church, slaves were allowed certain portions or time to work for themselves; the bishops also had a right to appoint the quantity of work that a slave was to perform, and prevent the master from using him too severely†; the bishops and clergy also recommended, as the most charitable action, the manumission of slaves, and set the example themselves by an established law, commanding that at the death of a bishop, every one of his slaves should receive their freedom, and that every other bishop and abbot within the kingdom should set three slaves at liberty‡. But notwithstanding all these prudent regulations, the greater part of the common people remained in that servile state at the end of the Saxon government.

Ranks of women.

As to the ranks of women, little need be said upon that head, for they were always of the same rank with their parents before marriage, and of their husbands afterwards; female slaves were seldom married to a freeman, before they had obtained their own freedom§.

Laws of the Anglo-Saxons.

Having taken this transient view of the government of our Anglo-Saxons, our next step will be to make some general observations upon the laws established among them. The laws of England are of two kinds, viz. the unwritten or common law, founded upon general and even particular customs and maxims that have existed from time immemorial, and the written, or statute laws, which comprehend the statutes, acts or edicts, made by the king with the advice of his council, and the concurrence of the nobility and the great assembly of the kingdom||.

Three systems of laws.

The first written laws of our ancestors were extremely concise, and not very numerous; in the beginning of the tenth century, three principal systems prevailed in different parts of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, as the West Saxon law, the Mercian law, and the Dane law; by the first, the western part of the kingdom were governed, by the second, the midland counties, and the third, which speaks its own origin, prevailed in the northern counties, and Norfolk and Suffolk the chief seats of the

\* Dr. Henry, vol. 2. p. 229.

† Spel. Concil, p. 405, &c.

‡ Ibid. p. 330.—331.

§ Hicessii Dissertatio Epist. p. 13.

|| Blackstone's Comment. vol. 1. Introduct. Section 3.

Danes. But these three systems of laws are not supposed to have differed from each other in the most essential part or general matter, but only, or at least chiefly, in the variation of the prices or mulcts affixed to the particular offences, which were higher in some parts of the kingdom than they were in others\*.

The great object of the Anglo Saxon penal laws, seems to have been to repair and make amends for injuries, rather than to punish crimes, for they made little or no difference between an injury committed through deliberate malice, and one done in the sudden gust of an unruly passion. Cnut, however, seems to have taken the matter into consideration, for one of his laws commands a difference to be made between an accidental and a wilful offence. The security of a man's property must at all times have been a great object; we may therefore reasonably expect to find the thief obnoxious to very severe penalties. In the beginning of the Saxon Heptarchy, however, theft of the most atrocious kind, such as robbing churches, or the king's palace, did not subject the thief to any corporal punishment; but if he was detected, the restoration he was obliged to make rendered thieving a very dangerous employment. By the laws of Ethelbert, the first Christian king of Kent, all church robberies were obliged to be compensated by a twelve-fold restoration; what was stolen from a bishop was to be returned eleven fold; from a king or priest, nine fold; from a deacon, six-fold; from other clerks, three fold†; the same three-fold compensation was to be made to every individual freeman; and if the thief was also a freeman, his goods were confiscated to the king‡. By degrees it was found necessary to make the penalties against theft more severe, and Wihfred, king of Kent, who flourished nearly a century after Ethelbert, made a law, that a thief who was detected in the act of pilfering, might be slain with impunity, if he either attempted to escape or offered to make resistance§; and Ina, king of Wessex, who was cotemporary with Wihfred, made theft a capital crime, but at the same time the friends or relations of the robber might redeem his life, by the payment of such a fine as his life was valued at by law, according to his rank and dignity||. By the laws of Athelstan, made A. D. 926, a theft must amount to the value of eight-pence¶ at least, to make it capital, and not long after it was raised to twelve-pence; and the same monarch raised the age at which a person might be condemned,

Laws against theft.

\* "For though we talk (says Sir Henry Spelman) of the West Saxon law, the Mercian law, and the Dane law, whereby the West parts of England and the middle parts, and those of Suffolk, Norfolk and the North were severally governed, yet held they all an uniformity in substance, differing rather in their mulcts than in their canon, that is, in the quantity of fines and

amercements, than in the course and frame of justice. Spelm. Remains, p. 49.

† Leges Ethelberti, Cap. 1.

‡ Ibid. cap. 9.

§ Wilkins Leges Saxon, p. 12.

|| Ibid. p. 17.

¶ Equal in efficacy to 50 shillings of our present money.

from

from twelve to fifteen years\*. Every person who had been convicted of theft, and was delivered from the rigour of the law by the payment of the price of his life, was obliged either to procure sureties for his future good behaviour, or else to take oath that he would no more be guilty of the same offence; but if after being set at liberty, such person was again convicted of theft, he was to be hanged without any further redemption†: The accomplices also, as well as those who harboured robbers, or received stolen goods, knowing them to be such, were obnoxious to the same punishments, as the thief himself.

Laws against  
highway rob-  
bers and ban-  
ditti.

Robbers upon the high-way, and bands of robbers, provided they exercised their violence out of the territories or state to which they belonged, were not liable to any fine; for all the laws established by the Anglo-Saxon kings during the continuation of the Heptarchy against robberies, have this clause annexed to them, "Provided it was committed within the bounds of our dominion‡." By the laws of Ina, king of the West Saxons, a robber within the kingdom, was obliged to return all he had taken, and pay a fine of sixty-shillings; but if he was a leader of a banditti consisting of more than thirty-five persons, the full price of his life was exacted for the fine: a robber also, who broke into the king's palace, or a bishop's house, was fined 120 shillings; if he broke into the dwelling-house of an alderman, his fine was 80 shillings; 60 shillings if it was a thane's house; and 35 shillings if it belonged to an inferior landholder§: and thus moderate the compositions remained, until the eleventh century, when, by the laws of king Cnut, these mulcts were raised something higher||.

Laws for the  
preservation of  
the public  
peace.

Amongst a people of such a warlike disposition as our Anglo-Saxon ancestors are represented, it must have been necessary to have many laws, and those pretty severe, for the preservation of the public peace, and the prevention of private quarrels, in which men might be wounded or slain. By the laws of Ina, A. D. 693, it was ordained, that any one who broke the peace within the limits of the king's court, or in the house of a bishop, should be fined 120 shillings; in an alderman's house 80 shillings; in a thane's house 60 shillings; and in the house of an inferior landholder, 30 shillings¶; and these mulcts were considerably raised by a law of Ælfred the Great, which extends so far as to declare, that if a man fought, or even drew his sword in anger within the verge of the king's court\*\*, his life should lie at the king's mercy, but if his life was spared, it was to be redeemed by the payment of his full were-gyld or the price his life was rated at according to his rank††; such also as broke the peace in cathedral churches were liable to the

\* Wilkins, Leg. Sax. 56.—65.

† Ib d. p. 70.

‡ Ibid. p. 16.

§ Ibid. p. 16.—23.

|| Ibid. p. 143.

¶ Ibid. p. 22.

\*\* The verge of the court extended 3 miles and a half every way from the house in which the king lodged, Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 63.

†† Ibid. p. 36.

same penalties as in the king's court, but, in middling churches, a fine of 120 shillings was exacted for the same crime; in lesser churches, which had a burying place belonging to them, 60 shillings was thought a sufficient recompence; and in the smaller churches, that had no burying place, the penalty was only 30 shillings \*. Laws were also established, with severe fines, against quarrelling and fighting in inns and public houses †.

The laws for punishing personal injuries, were very numerous, so that the narrow limits of this work permit us only to make some general observations on a few of the most interesting: and first,

By the Anglo-Saxon laws, a certain value was set upon every man's head, from the king to the slave, according to his rank; and when any man killed another, he was obliged to pay the price that was fixed by the laws, according to the rank of the person slain, and this mulct was called a man's were, or were-gylt ‡, and made a chief article in the doom book; as may appear from the laws of king Æthelstan. By these laws the extent of each man's were is fixed, and the persons declared who were to receive it. The were-gylt for the king was 14400 Saxon shillings, equal in quantity of silver to about 240 pounds, and to 775 pounds sterling; this mulct was to be divided into two equal parts, one half of which was paid to the relations of the murdered prince, as a compensation for their loss, and the other to the public, for the death of their king. The were-gylt of every other person, of what rank soever, above the slaves, was also divided, and one half of it paid to the family of the deceased, to compensate for the loss of their relation, and to appease their resentment against the murderer, and the other half was due to the king, to make amends to him for the loss of a subject §. If a freeman killed his own slave, he had nothing to pay but a small fine for breach of the peace, which was received by the king; but if he killed a slave belonging to another man, besides the mulct above-mentioned to the king, he was obliged to pay the value of the slave ¶ to his master. If a slave murdered a freeman, his owner was obliged to pay the were-gylt of the freeman to the king, and to the deceased's relations, or put the murderer into their hands; and if a slave killed his own master, he was always put to death, because having no property, it was impossible for him to make compensation; and if a slave killed another slave, it lay in the breast

Only a general account of the laws to be given.

Laws against murder.

\* Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 126.

† Ibid. 9.

‡ From *pepe*, a man, and *gyltan* to yield or pay.

§ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 72. Here we may observe that the portion of the were-gylt that was paid to the king was called *frithbote*, from *frith*, peace, and *bote*,

compensation, and that part paid to his family; *mægbot* from *Wærg*, kindred, and *bote*.—Somner Dictionar. Sax. in voce.

¶ The value of the slave was called *Manbote*, or *man-price*, Du Cange. Gloss. in voc.

of his master, to punish him as he pleased. As it was customary by law for all the near relations of a murdered man to receive a portion of the payment of his were-gyld, so also it was usual with them to contribute their share in the payment of these mulcts, for any of their relations that had committed any murder; by this means the punishment was considerably lessened, and a great part of the burthen taken from the shoulders of the guilty persons; to prevent this, in some measure, king Eadmund, who reigned from A. D. 941, to A. D. 946, procured the establishment of a law, which declared the murderer to be the only object of the resentment of the injured parties, and excused his relations from paying any share of the mulct that was imposed upon him; but this law not producing the desired effect, in the reign of king Æthelred the Unready, A. D. 1008, a law was made, declaring, that a murder committed within the walls of a church was inexpiable without the special permission of the king, which, however, being obtained, excused not the murderer from the payment of a mulct to the church for the violation of its protection, as also his frithbote to the king, and mægbote to the injured family\*. But surely these laws against murder were much too lenitive, especially when we consider the Anglo-Saxons as a war-like people, impatient of affronts, and swift to revenge them; to which may be added, their having almost constantly their swords in their hands, so that quarrels must too often have proved fatal in this period.

Laws against  
wounding, and  
their extent

As there were certain prices set upon the life of a man, so also all his limbs were valued by the same laws; and maims, bruises, or wounds in any part of them, were to be compensated according to their breadth, length, or depth; these prices were formed into a book of rates, which was ordered to be learnt by heart by every judge, before he was admitted into his office†; and when any person was convicted of having wounded or maimed another, he was sentenced from the doom-book to pay to the injured person the price there settled, more or less, according to the dimensions of the hurt, or the part of the body it was upon‡; and these prices by the law of king Eadmund, were ordered to be paid without the least abatement whatever.

The.

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. ut sup.

† Ibid. p. 5, 6, 7.

‡ For the further satisfaction of the reader, a translation here follows of the laws of Ethelbert, first Christian king of Kent, which may serve as a specimen of the most ancient Anglo-Saxon laws. This prince reigned from A. D. 560, to A. D. 616.—The Saxon original, with a Latin translation, may be found in Wilkins Leg. Ang. Sax. p. 1.—7.

1. Let him that robbeth a church, make compensation twelve-fold; he that stealeth the goods of a bishop, eleven-fold; of a priest, nine-fold; of a deacon, six-fold; of a clerk, three-fold; he that violates the peace of a church, shall pay two-fold; of a monastery, two-fold.

2. When the king calls an assembly of his people, and any injury be done to them therein, it shall be compensated two-fold, and 50 shillings be paid to the king.



The Anglo-Saxons, like their ancestors the Germans, seem to have been very tenacious of the honour and chastity of the fair-sex, for by the laws of this period, many severe pecuniary penalties were inflicted on those who attempted the violation of their honour; and these penalties

Laws for the preservation of the chastity of the fair-sex.

3. If the king be at an entertainment in another's house, and any damage be done there, let it be compensated nine-fold.

4. If a freeman steal the king's goods, let him repay nine-fold.

5. If any man kill another in the king's city, he shall pay fifty shillings.

6. If any man kill a freeman, he shall pay fifty shillings to the king for the loss of his subject.

7. If any of the king's servants be killed, as his master smith, or butler, let the murderer pay the customary price.

8. If the king's patronage be violated, the compensation shall be fifty shillings.

9. If one freeman steal from another freeman, he shall repay three-fold; a mulct shall be imposed, and his goods confiscated to the king.

10. If a man shall violate the chastity of the king's maid servant, being a virgin, her virginity shall be compensated by fifty shillings.

11. If she be the grinding maid, the mulct shall be twenty-five shillings, and if of the third rank, twelve shillings.

12. If she be the king's victualling maid, let the compensation be twenty shillings.

13. Let him that murders a man in the city of an earl, pay twelve shillings.

14. If a man debauch a maid, that is cup-bearer to an earl, let her virginity be compensated with twelve shillings.

15. Let the violation of a yeoman's patronage be compensated with six shillings.

16. If the chastity of a maid that is cup-bearer to a yeoman be violated, let the compensation be six shillings; that of a yeoman's other maid servant, fifty scettas; and of those of the third rank, thirty scettas.

17. He that first breaketh into another man's house, shall be amerced six shillings; the second, three shillings; and each of the rest, one shilling.

18. Let him be amerced six shillings, that shall lend a man his arms, where there is a quarrel, though no damage be done.

19. Let a robbery be compensated with six shillings.

20. But if a man be killed, the murderer shall compensate his death with twenty shillings.

21. If one man murders another, he shall make compensation for his death with the ordinary mulct of one hundred shillings.

22. If a man be killed at an open grave, the murderer shall be amerced twenty shillings, besides the ordinary mulct which he must pay within forty days.

23. If a murderer escape from justice, his relations shall pay half the ordinary mulct.

24. He that bindeth a freeman, shall make compensation with twenty shillings.

25. Let him that killeth the guest of a yeoman, compensate his death with six shillings.

26. If a landlord murder his chief guest, he shall compensate his death with eighty third, shillings.

27. If he kills his second guest, the compensation shall be sixty shillings, if the forty.

28. If a freeman cut down a hedge, let the compensation be six shillings.

29. If a man take any thing kept within a house, let him restore it three-fold.

30. If a freeman break down a hedge, the compensation shall be four shillings.

31. He that hath committed a murder, shall make compensation according to the true valuation in current money.

32. If a freeman commit adultery with a freeman's wife, let him compensate by buying another wife for the injured freeman.

33. If a man prick another in the right thigh, let him make amends for the same.

34. If he pulls him by the hair, let him pay fifty scettas.

35. If the bone appear, let a compensation be made with three shillings.

36. If the bone be hurt, let the payment be four shillings.

37. If the bone be broke, let the compensation be ten shillings.

38. If both be done, let it be twenty shillings.

c c 2

39. If

ties were stated from the slightest indecency, to the rudest violence, greater or smaller, according to the rank and quality of the abused female; the forcible violation of the chastity of a nun, was esteemed a crime as high as murder, and the same fine was accordingly inflicted upon

39. If the shoulder be lamed, let it be compensated with twenty shillings.

40. If a man be made deaf of an ear, let the compensation be twenty-five shillings.

41. If the ear be cut off, let it be compensated with twelve shillings.

42. If the ear be bored through, the compensation shall be three shillings.

43. If the ear be clipped off, let it be compensated with six shillings.

44. If an eye be struck out, let fifty shillings be the compensation.

45. If the mouth or eye be injured, let the payment of twelve shillings make amends.

46. If the nose be bored through, let the payment be nine shillings.

47. If only one membrane be bored through, three shillings shall be the compensation.

48. If both, six shillings.

49. If both nostrils are slit, let the compensation be six shillings each.

50. If they be bored, the compensation shall be six shillings.

51. If any one cut off the chin bone of another, compensation shall be made with twenty shillings.

52. For each of the four fore-teeth, the compensation shall be six shillings; for that which stands next, four shillings; for the next, three shillings; for all the rest, three shillings each; if it be an impediment to the speech of the injured party, twelve shillings shall be the compensation; and if the jaw be broken, six shillings.

53. If a man's arm be bruised, it shall be compensated with six shillings; and if it is broke, with six shillings.

54. Amends for the cutting off a man's thumb, shall be twenty shillings; for the nail of the thumb, three shillings; for the forefinger eight shillings; for the midfinger, four shillings; for the ring finger, six shillings; and for the little finger, eleven shillings.

55. For each finger nail, one shilling.

56. For the least blemish, three shillings, for greater ones six shillings.

57. If one strike another a blow on the nose with his fist, he shall pay three shillings.

58. If the nose of an injured party be wounded, it shall be compensated with one shilling.

59. If a stroke given without the cloths be black, the compensation shall be thirty scætas; if the same be within the cloths, twenty scætas.

60. If the diaphragm be wounded, the compensation shall be twelve shillings; if it be bored, twenty.

61. If one be made to-halt, let the compensation be thirty shillings.

62. If one wound the callous, let thirty shillings be the recompence.

63. If a man's privities be cut off, the compensation shall be thrice the ordinary mulct; if it is bored, six shillings, if cut, six shillings.

64. If a man's thigh be broke, the recompence shall be twelve shillings; if it be lamed, the friends shall judge the fine.

65. For a broken rib, be the compensation three shillings.

66. If the thigh be pricked, for every prick let six shillings be paid; if one inch deep, one shilling; two inches, two shillings; if above two inches, three shillings.

67. If a vertebra be wounded, the payment shall be three shillings.

68. Fifty shillings shall be paid if the foot be cut off.

69. For a great toe cut off, ten shillings.

70. For each of the rest of the toes, shall be paid half price, as is enacted of the fingers.

71. For the nail of the great toe, shall be paid thirty scætas, and ten for any one of the rest.

72. If a free woman wearing her hair, do any thing unworthy, let her make amendment by payment of thirty shillings.

73. Let the compensation of a virgin be the same as that of a free man.

74. Let the violation of the patronage of the chief widow of a noble family, be compensated with fifty shillings; of the next, with

upon the ravisher, besides which he was looked upon as unworthy of Christian burial. A rape committed on a person under age was punished by mutilating of the criminal, the most effectual method of preventing a repetition of the crime\*; the laws also against adulteresses were very severe, especially that made by ordinance of king Cnut, whereby an adulteress was not only branded with infamy, and forfeited all her goods, but was condemned to have her nose and lips cut off, that her beauty might no longer be an object of lustful enticement †.

Nor was the Anglo-Saxon legislature defective in endeavouring to secure offenders from the sudden passion of the injured parties; for as the Saxons were in general people of a fierce and violent disposition, they would be often apt to revenge their own cause, as severely as their unruly passion dictated; for this reason, certain places were appointed as sanctuaries, whither the offenders flying, were sure to find protection from the sudden violence of those they had offended; of this sort was the king's court, and all churches, where criminals were screened for a time, that they might have an opportunity of making amends for the injuries they had committed ‡; the king and all bishops had authority by law, to defend all criminals that sought protection of them during nine days, and abbots and aldermen had the power of screening them three days, at the end of which space, if proper satisfaction was not made, the offending party was delivered up to justice, and punished according to the nature of the crime §.

A good name was absolutely necessary among the Anglo-Saxons, <sup>Laws against</sup> for without it no man could be admitted into the thythings or. dece- Calumny.

with twenty; of the third, by twelve; and of the fourth, with six.

75. If a widow be married; who is not at her own disposal, the husband shall make double compensation for the violated patronage.

76. If a man buy a maid with his money, let her stand for bought, if there be no fraud in the bargain, if there be, let her be returned home, and the purchase money restored to him again.

77. If she bear any live issue, let her have half her husband's goods, if she outlive him.

78. If she be desirous to depart with her children, let half his estate be hers.

79. If the husband will not part with his goods, he must keep his children.

80. If they have no issue, her relations shall have her goods and dowry.

81. If a man ravish a maid, fifty shillings shall be paid to her first master, and after he may redeem her at his pleasure.

82. If she was before betrothed to ano-

ther, a recompence must be made of twenty shillings.

83. If she be with child, the offender shall pay thirty-five shillings, and fifteen to the King.

84. If a man commit adultery with the wife of a servant, the husband yet living, let him make double recompence.

85. If a slave kill another slave, being innocent, let him recompence his death with all his substance.

86. If a servant's eye and foot be struck off, it must be compensated.

87. If one man bind another man's servant, he shall pay six shillings.

88. If a man rob a servant, he shall pay three shillings.

89. If a servant steal any thing, he shall make double restitution.

\* Wilkins Leg. Ang. Sax. 40. 72.

† Ibid. 142.

‡ Ibid. p. 15. 37, &c.

§ Ibid. p. 63.

naries.

naries, but was esteemed a vagabond, and unworthy of the protection of the laws. It was therefore, that in the Anglo-Saxon laws, detraction, and calumny, was thought a crime more atrocious than robbery. By one of the laws of Lothair, king of Kent, who reigned from A. D. 673, to A. D. 685, a calumniator was sentenced to pay one shilling to the master of the house where he uttered his defamations, six shillings to the person whose character he injured, and twelve shillings to the king\*. But Eadger the Peaceable, who reigned upwards of two centuries and a half after, made a law much severer against detractors, by which they were sentenced to have their tongue cut out, or else to redeem it by the payment of their full were-gyld, or the price of their life, and this law was afterwards confirmed by Cnut the Dane †.

Other laws.

Besides what has already been mentioned, idolatry, sorcery, witchcraft, perjury, forgery, coining, and high treason, with various other crimes, were obnoxious to severe penalties, but of these also the greater part were pecuniary ‡.

Proceedings in courts of justice.

In matters where the truth could not easily be discovered, oaths and solemn appeals to heaven became frequent, and in all causes both civil and criminal, each party appeared in the court of justice, attended by a great number of witnesses, ready to swear in favour of the party they came to support. The accused was himself first obliged to take oath that he was innocent of the crime laid to his charge, and then produce a certain number of persons called compurgators, who were to declare upon oath that they believed him to be innocent. These compurgators were ordered by law to be persons of unblemished character and credit, and near neighbours, or the relations of the persons accused; their number was not always the same, for in some cases two or three were thought sufficient, but in others a greater number, even forty or fifty, or sometimes a hundred, though twelve or twenty-four were the most common numbers. If the accused was a female, the compurgators were also of the same sex, but in no other case. If the criminal produced the number of compurgators required by law, and they all took oath that they believed him innocent, he was acquitted; but if he could not bring before the court a sufficient number, or in case any one of them refused to swear, he was sentenced as guilty §.

Besides

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 9.

† Ibid. p. 78. 136.

‡ Coiners of base money, indeed, were sentenced to lose their right hand, and traitors against the nation were put to death, because no amends could be made to a whole people for so dangerous and capital offence. Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 59. 103.

§ These compurgators are thought by many learned men to have been (says a modern author) "the genuine predecessors of the jurors, or jrymen of later times; but (adds he) this opinion is liable to many objections: and any reader who attentively considers the description of the compurgators, as given above, will perceive

Besides the compurgators, a vast number of witnesses were usually examined upon oath, and the oath they took differed greatly from that administered to the compurgators; for the latter only swore that they believed the person to be innocent, whilst the former swore they were certain of the truth of the matters which they related.

Oaths were most commonly taken in a church; for which reason it was usual to hold a court of justice as near to some place of worship as was convenient. The person to whom the oath was administered laid his right hand upon the altar, or on the holy gospels, or upon the relics of the saints\*. Warriors, and military men, would often swear upon their swords, and other arms, when an oath was required from them upon any emergency. Nor was the oath of every person esteemed equal by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors; on the contrary, every man's oath obtained so much weight and influence in a court of justice according to his rank. As for example, the oath of a Thane was of equal weight with the oaths of six Ceorls†. Besides oaths, other solemn appeals to heaven were practised amongst the Anglo-Saxons, which were ordeals, or trials, in which it was imagined that the hand of God would be directly interposed to clear the innocent from false accusation, or condemn the guilty.

There were many different sorts of Ordeals used in England by the Saxons at this period, of which the chief seemed to have been the six following: Judicial combat; the Ordeal of the Cross; the Ordeal of the Confin'd; the Ordeal of Cold Water; the Ordeal of Hot Water; the Ordeal of Hot Iron.

Judicial combat, when the accused and the defendant were brought into the field, and fought with each other; the conqueror gained the cause, and the vanquished party was condemned. This method of trial was very common with the ancient Germans, as being well adapted to the genius and spirit of those warlike people; and it is very certain that it was retained by the Anglo-Saxons, but seems not to have been so often practised as those which follow.

When a criminal appealed to the Ordeal of the Cross, two sticks were prepared of an exact size and form; on one of them was made the figure of a cross, and the other was left quite plain: each of them was wrapped up in a quantity of fine wool, and laid upon the altar, or else upon the relics of some famous saint; and after prayers, composed for that purpose, being said, the priest approached the altar, and made choice of one of the sticks, which, if it proved to be that mark-

ceive they were different, in many respects, from our modern juries. They seem to bear a greater resemblance to those witnesses who do not pretend to know any thing of the fact in question, but are brought to speak to the character of the person upon trial." Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit.

vol. 2. p. 301.--- & vide Spelman. Gloss. in voc. *Jurata*, et Selden. Janus Anglorum lib. 2. cap. 4. &c.

\* Wilkins, Leg. Sax. p. 12. No man might take an oath, but who was perfectly sober, and even fasting, Du Cange, p. 1507.

† Wilkins, p. 64.

ed

ed with the cross, the prisoner was acquitted; but, on the contrary, if it was the plain stick, he was instantly condemned\*. In civil causes, the Ordeal of the Cross was otherwise conducted; for then two representatives were found, one for the plaintive, the other for the defendant, who were both obliged to stand, during the celebration of divine service, with their arms extended at full length so as to form a cross with their bodies, and he, whose representative first dropped his arms, lost his cause †.

Ordeal of the  
Corncd.

The Ordeal of the corncd, or consecrated bread, was commonly that to which the clergy themselves appealed when they lay under any accusation ‡; and it was thus performed: A piece of barley bread, and a piece of cheese were laid upon the altar, which were blessed by the priest, who pronounced a certain prayer and adjuration upon them, begging that the angel Gabriel might be sent from heaven to prevent the accused from swallowing the bread and cheese, if he was guilty. Prayers being ended, the criminal going to the altar, took the bread and cheese, and began to eat, which if he did, without any impediment, he was pronounced not guilty; but, if he could not easily swallow it, he was condemned as guilty §.

Ordeal of the  
Cold Water.

When any person appealed to the Ordeal of Cold Water, they were put under the direction of a priest, who enjoined them three days fasting, which being ended, and the day being come for trial, the culprit was led into the church, where mass was performed; but before the criminal was permitted to communicate, the priest said to him, as follows: "I conjure you, O man! in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; by the Christian religion which you profess; by Jesus, the only begotten Son of God; by the Holy Trinity; by the holy gospels, and by all the holy relics of the church, that you presume not to draw near to the altar, or to receive the communion, if you are guilty of this crime whereof you are accused; or, if you have consented to it; or, know by whom it was committed." If he still declared his innocence, he then had the sacrament given to him, with these words: "Let the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be received by you as a probation this day." This being performed, the prisoner was led to the pool where the trial was to be made in procession, and when he was come thither, a cup of holy water was given him; the priest, at the same time, praying that "it might also be a probation to him that day." Prayers then were made over the pool, and the prisoner stripped naked, and bound hand and foot; a rope was next bound round his middle, with a knot upon it at half a yard distance, and he was then thrust into the pool: if he sunk so deep as to pull the knot under water, he was instantly drawn out, and declared innocent; but if he swam at top, (which case we may well conclude rarely happened) he was pronounced guilty ||.

\* Spelman Gloss. voc. Crucis judicium.

§ Murator, ut sup.

† Murator Antiq. vol. 3.

|| Ibid.

‡ Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 128.

If a criminal appealed to the Ordeal of Hot Water, much the same ceremonies were used as those above described. When he had communicated, and still declared his innocence, a fire was kindled under the pot in which the water was contained for the trial, and, whilst it was heating, the priest uttered many prayers; and, as soon as it began to boil, a stone was suspended in the middle of it by a string, and was let down into the water the depth of one or two palms or more, according to the nature of the accusation. The pot was then taken off the fire, and set before it. The prisoner was afterwards to say the Lord's Prayer, which being done, and having signed himself with the figure of the cross, he thrust his naked hand and arm into the water, and took forth the stone. His arm was then instantly wrapped up in linen cloths, and put into a bag, sealed before the spectators, and the prisoner was then committed to the care of the priest. Three days after the trial, the prisoner was again produced, when the bag, being unsealed, and the cloths taken off, the arm was examined by four and twenty persons, twelve of them the friends of the accused, and the other twelve, the friends of the prosecutor; then, if the least mark or appearance of scalding was visible, the culprit was condemned; if not, he was honourably acquitted\*.

The other Ordeal of Hot Iron was of two kinds, performed either with a ball of iron, or plough-shares. The first was as follows: a ball of iron was prepared, lighter or heavier, according to the nature of the crime of which the criminal was accused†; and, on the appointed day, when all the previous prayers and ceremonies were concluded, the ball, being made red hot, was taken out of the fire. The prisoner having measured the distance of nine of his own feet, was allowed to stand with the toe of one of his feet touching one of the marks; the other stretched out as far as possible towards the other mark. Then several prayers were made, and a cup of holy water was given to the culprit, who drank it, and had his hand also sprinkled over with the same; then signing himself with the sign of the cross, he took the ball of iron into his hand, and carried it to the end of the further mark. His hand was then instantly wrapped up, and three days after examined in the same manner, as above-mentioned, before 24 witnesses: if any marks of burning appeared, he was condemned; if not acquitted‡. The other method was to blind the criminal, and make him pass over nine plough-shares heated red hot, and placed at unequal distances: if he performed this, without touching any one of the plough-shares, he was pronounced innocent; and, if not, adjudged guilty. The Or-

\* Du Cange Gloss.

† Ibid. tom. 3. p. 399---400.

‡ Of one, two, or three pounds, ac-

cording to the numbers of articles exhibited against him.---Carte's General Hist. of England, p. 368.

Laws relative  
to marriage.

deal of Hot Iron is thought to have been usually put in practice on persons only of high rank and quality\*.

Before we conclude this subject, we will briefly examine a few other laws. And, first, those relative to marriage. A woman, from the hour of her birth to the day of her death, was under the protection or guardianship of some one man or other, without whose consent she could not legally execute any deed. The guardianship was called *Mund*, and the guardian himself *Mundbora*, and whose right could not be forfeited unless by his own consent. Fathers were the guardians of their unmarried female children. After the death of the father, the brother supplied his place; and, on his decease, the nearest male relation. In case no male relation was left, all unmarried women were considered as under the immediate guardianship of the king himself. Before a man could marry a young lady, it was necessary for him to obtain the consent of the *Mundbora*, which was usually done by paying him a certain sum of money, more or less, according to the rank of the lady†; and if any man married a woman, without having first obtained the consent of the *Mundbora*, he was not only liable to a severe penalty for being guilty of the crime of *Mundbreach*, as it was termed, but he obtained no legal authority over his wife, or her goods, that authority still remaining with the guardian, who could not be deprived of it without his own consent; but, at the same time, the demand of the guardians were limited by law, according to the rank and wealth of the lady. A widow was only estimated at half the price that was fixed upon a maiden lady of the same rank. The consent of the guardian being obtained, the lovers were solemnly contracted, and a friend of the intended bridegroom became surety on his behalf that he should treat the lady well, and maintain her agreeable to her rank‡; and, on the making this contract, the dowry was settled by the husband. All the friends of either party were usually invited to the marriage, and made some present or other to the new married couple, particularly the father, brother, or guardian, whose presents generally consisted of arms, or furniture, cattle, money, or the like, according to his abilities§, and this was all the fortune the husband received with his wife. The presence of the *Mundbora* also was necessary at the time of marriage, who delivered the bride to the bridegroom, declaring that he gave her to be his wife, to keep his keys, and to share with him the honours of his bed and board, in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and then the nuptial

\* Du Cange Gloss.

† This present or payment, was called *Mede*, or *Prie*; and, in the barbarous Latin of the middle ages, *Maha*, or *Mahum*, which gave occasion of its being said that

in those days men bought their wives. Murator, vol. 2. p. 113, 114.

‡ Spelman Concil. p. 425.

§ This present was called *padepnium*, or *Father's Gift*. Spelman Gloss. in voc. blessing



blessing was pronounced by the priest. Besides the dowry, which the husband had already made to his wife, the morning after the marriage it was usual for him to make her some valuable present\*, which was perfectly at her own disposal. There seems anciently to have been no possibility of separation between man and wife, but by death, or in case the wife was found guilty of adultery: but, towards the latter end of this period, voluntary separations, and even divorces, by degrees, became frequent, especially amongst the nobility; and the great merit that the monks made concerning the vows of chastity contributed not a little to the encouragement of such separations. Indeed, by the common law, if either party made a vow of chastity, the other could not prevent a separation, nor even marry another person. The husband, after marriage, became the guardian, lord, and protector of the wife; he might dispose of her goods, and was the governor of all the issue of the marriage, whose conduct he might regulate, and correct their faults. He also had the sole power of disposing of his daughters in marriage, and might even sell, either his sons or daughters, into slavery, provided it was done to relieve his immediate necessities.

When a father died, and left children behind him, they became his heirs. If they were all sons, it has been thought, that the possessions of the parent were equally divided amongst them, and that the same method was pursued, if, on the contrary, they were all of them females; but whether, when they consisted of boys and girls, any distinction was made, or what was the extent of such distinctions, cannot be known. When a man died without any children, the estate descended to the next nearest relations; and, if no relations laid claim to it, it became the property of the king†.

Concerning the crown itself, in the beginning of the Heptarchy, it descended regularly from the father to the eldest son, as may be easily perceived by examining the records of that period; but, by degrees, the regularity of the succession was violated, and brothers, of a warlike disposition, supplanted their infant nephews. After the order was once broken through, the breach, by degrees, was made still wider, and princes of the royal blood, at a distance from the throne, were frequently preferred to those that were nearer, and had a better title, if they appeared more capable of supporting the royal dignity, or, indeed, if they were more powerful: and, in some cases, the matter was carried to such a length, that the crown fell a prey to tyrants and usurpers, who were not of the blood royal. After the union of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, the regular succession continued to be broken; and even Ælfred, the greatest of our Anglo-Saxon monarchs,

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 144. This present was called, *Morgengift*, or *Morning Gift*.

mounted the throne which belonged to his young nephews; but the troubles and immediate danger of the nation, at that time, may sufficiently justify the proceeding. The like happened afterwards; but the daring usurpation of Harold, earl of Kent, is the most extraordinary. The last wills of deceased monarchs had frequently great weight in the appointment of the successor; though such wills were never regarded as valid, or of any binding authority to the kingdom, unless they were farther confirmed by the approbation of the Wittenagemot, or great assembly of the people\*.

Conveyances of  
estates.

The conveyance of estates by will was first practised by the Anglo-Saxon kings, and other great men, in order to provide for their youngest children or relations, or to enrich the church for the good of their souls. But this custom soon gained such ground among the commoner sort of people, that Ælfred found it necessary to make a law forbidding any person to alienate an estate which had descended to him from his natural heirs, if the first proprietor or purchaser had directed, by writing, or before creditable witnesses, that such estates should remain in the family †. But, soon after, ignorance and superstition among the people, and avarice among the clergy, prevailed so much, that entails, and all legal restraints, were removed; and a man was permitted to leave as much as he pleased to the church, though his family was thereby brought to beggary and distress.

Laws relative  
to compacts, &c.

The Anglo-Saxons had a variety of laws relative to the making of contracts; the security of real and personal estates; for recovering just debts, and establishing a mutual confidence in each other, and for the preservation of peace and good order. Before the introduction of writing, all compacts were made in the presence of a magistrate, or in the Hundred Court, that in case any dispute should afterwards arise, unexceptionable witnesses might be produced ‡; and, on the introduction of writing, in any considerable transactions, to prevent mistakes in terms and conditions, they were sometimes written upon the blank leaf of the church bible, which was always accounted a sufficient and authentic record §. The laws against insolvent debtors were very severe; for the creditors were empowered not only to strip them of every thing that they had, but to imprison their persons, and even reduce them to slavery ||.

\* "Thus we are told," (says Squire) "by king Ælfred himself, that he, as well as his father before him, had read their last testament to a general assembly, knowing well enough, that however they might dispose of the kingdom, their wills could not be duly executed without the ge-

neral assent and consent first obtained. Squire on the Eng. Constitut. p. 203.

† Leges Ælfredi, cap. 37. Wilkins & Lamborde.

‡ Hiccefi Dissertat. Epist. p. 3.

§ Ibid. p. 22, 23.

|| Wilkins Leg. Ang. Sax. &c.

Such is the general idea of the government and laws of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, which may justly be esteemed as the great foundation of our present more perfect constitution—and that liberty we have so long happily enjoyed.

Conclusion of  
the chapter.

## C H A P. II.

*State of architecture amongst the Anglo-Saxons, from the accession of Egbert to the arrival of William the Conqueror, A. D. 1066.*

IT evidently appears from our ancient historians that the Anglo-Saxons, particularly in the eighth and ninth centuries, did not attend to the building castles, or the fortifying their great towns, with so much assiduity, as was necessary for the public safety. And their neglect in these important particulars, are circumstances that greatly facilitated the incursions of the Danes. Indeed, Ælfred the Great seems to have been the first monarch who took the matter into serious consideration; for after he had in a great measure subdued the Danes, in order to prevent if possible their future attacks, he spent great part of his time, and his measures, in repairing the ruined walls of the great towns, and building strong castles and places of defence in the most advantageous situations \*. After the death of Ælfred, his son Edward closely imitated his example, and repaired many places that had been ruined by the Danes, made new fortifications, and built several very strong castles. Æthelfleda, governess of Mercia, Edward's martial sister, not only led the people whom she governed personally to the field of battle, but also erected many castles and places of defence for the security of their possessions, by which means she so much over-awed the neighbouring Danes, that they submitted themselves to her, and many of them voluntarily became her subjects. From this period the building and re-

The Saxons  
neglected to  
build castles.

\* The idleness and ignorance of the infatuated people, hindered not a little the progress of this material business, as we may learn from the mouth of Asserius, who after taking notice of the cities that Ælfred repaired, the royal forts and castles that he built with stone and wood, with admirable art, he proceeds to inform us, that notwithstanding the example of this good prince, and all his persuasions, intreaties, and threatenings, the nobility and officers were remiss in their duty, and backward in the building of forts, and re-

pairing places of defence, (which were frequently quite neglected, or begun in such unseasonable times, that they were destroyed by the enemy, before they were completed) nor would they be persuaded of the unreasonableness of their indolence, till the loss of their parents, their wives, families, friends and estates, all which were destroyed by the barbarous enemy, convinced them of their fault, and made them applaud the council of their prince. After vit. Ælfredi.

pairing,

pairing of castles for the national defence, became an object of public attention, and one of the three services to which all the landholders of the kingdom became subject\*.

Earth-works  
of Saxon castles.

In the former volume is given a short account of the remaining earth-works of Tong Castle in Kent, accompanied with two copper-plates, one of them containing the plan, and the other a perspective view of that castle†. This venerable fortification was built either by Hengist himself, or his immediate descendants, and consists, as we there see, of a large circular hill, flat at the top, (upon which the castle itself was erected) and surrounded with a broad deep ditch, which is again encircled with a strong external bank or vallum; such was the constant form of the ground-work of the Saxon castles, or at least, if it was varied, the difference was not material or intended, but evidently occasioned by the nature of the place, where the castle was constructed. At Witham and at Malden, two towns in Essex, are also to this day to be seen, the ground-works of two famous Saxon Castles, both thought to have been built by Edward the elder, but that the former was, we are positively assured by the Saxon Chronicle, which informs us that it was built A. D. 913, the king himself and his army mean-while lying at Malden, which is barely six miles off. These two fortifications correspond exactly with that of Tong, above described, consisting only of one large flat hill, surrounded by a broad deep ditch and an external vallum‡. Those authors appear to me to be very much mistaken, who attribute the double fortification of a keep and base court § to the Saxons; such fortifications are of Norman original, and one chief reason for this supposition is, that the keep is never to be found but in such places as the Normans are expressly said to have built. It may indeed be argued, that they frequently took possession of the Saxon castles, and dwelt in them; and that they did, will not be doubted, but it is as certain that whenever they did so, they altered the mode of fortification, and added a keep to the Saxon base court, in order to make it compleat, which is constantly to be found in all the fortifications wherein the Normans resided.

\* In the life of Edward the elder, pag. 41. of this vol.

† Vol. I. of this Chron. plates XII and XIII, and pag. 317, 318, &c.

‡ These two entrenchments are represented in a work called *þorpa Angelcýnnan*, or a View of the Manners, Customs, &c. of the English, and a full description of them, with their mensurations, vol. I. page 24, 25.

§ The keep, is a high hill, raised at one end of the fortification, higher than the area of the castle, which is thence called the base or lower court. This keep was first added by the Normans to the low flat hill or base court of the Saxons. This matter is fully discussed and explained in the work last quoted, vol. I. pag. 91, 92. with views of the different sorts of fortification given on the plates.

Great pains have been taken, in order to trace out, if possible, some sure criterion, by which the Saxon and Danish entrenchments might be distinguished from each other, and on the examination of the two encampments given in the former volume, the one of king Ælfred, and the other of Hasting the Dane, it was hoped that it might easily have been done, because the former was of a circular form, a little inclining to the oval, and the latter an oblong square, with the corners gently rounded; this observation naturally led to further researches, and as Hasting, besides the present temporary camp, is said positively to have built a strong castle at Bemset, in Essex, it was thought absolutely necessary to examine that, and see how far it corresponded with this camp. But the earth works of that fortification, which yet remain in a pretty perfect state, were found to differ from the above-mentioned camp, and agree exactly with those of the Saxons described before. This circumstance will render it exceedingly difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to fix any certain rules for distinguishing the Saxon and Danish fortifications, where we cannot call in the assistance of history to our aid; perhaps all the entrenchments that are found, like that before described of Hasting, the Dane, either square, or an oblong square, may with great reason be called Danish, because we find none absolutely Saxon that are of those forms; but then on the other hand it must be owned, it cannot positively be affirmed, that all those that are circular or oval, like that of Ælfred, are always Saxon, and not of Danish construction; for as these two people differed from each other so little in their original manners, it is not at all surprizing, that they should both follow the same, or nearly the same modes of fortifications, and make war upon the same plan.

Having seen the earth-works of the castles of the Anglo-Saxons, we may next enquire concerning the nature and form of the superstructure, which consisted of high thick walls on the outside, flanked with bastions, and strong towers at the corners; the external form of the castles was varied according to the nature of their situation, or the will of the builder. The castle was also surrounded by a strong wall, doubtless fortified with towers and bastions, erected upon the external vallum, which enclosed the broad deep ditch, over which it was necessary for the enemy to pass, before they could come to the castle itself, and the communication between the outer gate of the external wall, and the gate of the castle, was either by means of a draw-bridge, or else a strong covered way, which consisted of a narrow passage, closely guarded; the castle had but few windows on the outside, and those very small, through which they could discharge their darts and other offensive weapons at the enemy\*.

No great variations between the Saxon and Danish entrenchments.

Superstructure of the Saxon castles considered.

\* See the account of Colchester castle in the work above quoted, vol. I. p. 26.

Towns how  
fortified.

In the days of the heptarchy, large towns were frequently void of any other fortification, than a large bank that ran round them, and planks of wood of great thickness erected thereon, in the manner of a palisade. But principal cities were afterwards by degrees made more strong, and encircled with walls of stone; this prudent regulation, as we have before observed, went but slowly on, until Ælfred the Great; and his son Edward the Elder, encouraged the pursuance of it by their advice and examples. Then the cities and large towns were enclosed within strong walls of stone, having bastions and towers at convenient distances from each other, the better to defend them\*.

Manner of  
besieging  
strong places.

The general method of attacking fortified places amongst either the Saxons, or the Danes, seems to have been by assault, and if they could not quickly prevail, it was common for them to raise the siege and depart, revenging themselves upon the bordering countries. The idea of surrounding a garrison, and cutting off all the communication between it and the country, in order to oblige the besieged to surrender for want of food, seems first to have been practised by king Ælfred, and was afterwards followed, though not very often, by the Danes as well as the Saxons. However, if a garrison was well victualled, and held out a considerable time, their impatience seldom permitted them to continue long enough to reduce it.

Decline of the  
art of archi-  
tecture and its  
revival.

We meet with many accounts of grand and noble edifices being erected by the Anglo-Saxons, not only after the union of the heptarchy, but even long before, some account of which we have already seen; and architecture was without doubt rising to a considerable height at the time of the commencement of the united monarchy, but from the dreadful devastations occasioned by the Danes in the succeeding times, the most beautiful edifices were destroyed, and this art much neglected; so that in the days of Ælfred the Great, stone buildings were very rare, not only from the want of time to erect them, but also of artists skillful enough to undertake the performance: so that when that great prince formed the design of rebuilding the ruined cities, churches and monasteries, he was obliged to send into foreign countries for artists, and numbers that excelled in the various branches of the mechanic arts from several different nations, came readily to his assistance; these were usually all overlooked by the king himself, who was the best architect of his age†. Many of the buildings erected by him were such as in those times were called magnificent, and were viewed with the greatest admiration. Some idea of the mode of building may be

\* To express this in the words of Malmfbury, who mentions Edward the Elder's repairing Exeter, says, "*Urbem igitur illam, quam contaminata, gentis repurgis defæcaverat turribus munivit, muro ex quadratis lapidibus cinxit.*"—Malmf. in vit. Edwardi.

† This building, together with a view of the church itself, is given by Hearne in his preface to Leland's Collect. vol. I. together with a plan and full description of every part of it.

formed

formed from an examination of the ancient church of St. Peter, at Oxford, if we can suppose (as indeed there seems to be no reason to doubt it) that the vault on which the present chancel stands is the original building that was completed under the direction of Grimbald, a monk of Reims, who came to the court of king Ælfred to assist him in reviving the study of letters amongst his subjects. This building is low, and arched over, the arches are supported by two rows of columns, short, thick, and exceedingly heavy, and on four of the capitals of columns that front the west, are rude sculptures of foliage, and some attempts to represent figures by way of ornament\*; the windows are but few and very small, so that, according to the present taste of building, it wears but an unfavourable aspect, and perhaps we may in general conclude, that the most esteemed Saxon edifices were such as would now be called low, gloomy, irregular and heavy.

The arches of the Anglo-Saxon buildings were always semi-circular, the architecture plain and simple, the ornaments few, and those chiefly consisting of foliage and branches, interwoven with birds, or beasts, or else rude sculptures representing some church history, or the actions of a particular saint. Such arches as composed the doors and windows of the Saxon edifices, seem to have had no other ornament whatever, than a variety of cornices, which were more or less numerous, as the architect thought necessary; and these are all the ornaments we find them charged with, in such of the remaining ruins of that age, as still bear the marks of their original purity; the same also are all those that are found in the various Saxon manuscript delineations †.

The arches of the Saxon buildings, round.

The devastations occasioned by the frequent incursions of the Danes, put so great a stop to the progress of architecture, that though it was again revived by Ælfred, and pursued by his son and some of the immediate successors; yet it does not seem to have been in so flourishing a condition as it might have been before the Danish invasions; for even in the days of Eadgar the Peaceable, who reigned from A. D. 959, to A. D. 975, many of the monasteries and large churches in England, were mean wooden structures; and indeed some of them had no other covering than thatch ‡. Whilst the magnificence and beauty of the more consequential buildings were so much affected by the miseries which the Danes occasioned, we may depend upon it that the private houses of the nobility, and those of the common people, were also proportionably rude and inelegant; and of this our ancient historians seem to have agreed, declaring, that the Anglo-Saxon

This art declines again.

\* Afferius vit. Ælfredi.

† See vol. II. pag. 2. of the *hopyda Angel-cynnann*, or *Manners and Customs of the English*.

‡ This prince himself at his accession to the throne, observed that all the monasteries in England were in a ruinous condition, and consisted only of rotten boards. W. Malmsh. lib. 2.

nobility had no great taste for magnificent buildings, but usually dwelt in small and inconvenient houses\*.

Domestic  
buildings of  
the Saxons.

Unhappily, few or no remains of Saxon architecture, especially of the palaces and private houses, are to be met with in the kingdom, so that very little can be said respecting their form and extent. In order, if possible, to throw some light upon this matter, the buildings represented upon some of the plates of this volume, are such as occur in Saxon manuscripts, and might most likely bear some resemblance to those they inhabited†. If these can be depended upon (as there seems no reason to the contrary) we shall find them irregular, inelegant, and to all appearance inconvenient; the windows in general are small and long, and very few in number, which was owing to the want of skill in manufacturing of glass, for though this art had been introduced into Britain as early as the seventh century, yet it was afterwards so neglected, that very few or no private houses had glass windows till the end of this period‡.

Materials used  
by the Saxons.

The materials which the Anglo-Saxons used in their buildings, during the time of the heptarchy, were briefly mentioned in the foregoing volume; and, during the present period, especially in their fortifications, and most magnificent buildings, the same materials might continue in use: but that their domestic buildings were chiefly constructed with wood, we may be well assured, and without doubt those of the more middling class of life were only framed with timber, and the sides covered by weather boards, or else with walls made with lath and plaister, which they understood how to beautify before this time; for in the days of the heptarchy, when bishop Wilfrid repaired the cathedral of York, he caused the walls to be white-washed with lime§.

Carpenters art  
better under-  
stood than  
masonry.

Though, from the scarcity of stone buildings, it is likely at this period that masonry was not arrived at full perfection, yet from the multiplicity of wooden structures, it is certain that the carpenters and joiners art must have been well understood; and, it can be made appear, that there were many who excelled in these important branches of architecture. This indeed is positively affirmed by several authors, who were eye-witnesses to their skill. Egilric, the successor of Turketull, in the abbey of Croyland, made great additions to the building there, adding many beautiful edifices, as they were then called, which were constructed of beams of wood most exactly joined together, and highly polished by the admirable art of the carpenter||.

\* Malmsh. lib. 3. Rossii.

† See plates III. V. XVIII. and XIX. All the buildings represented upon these plates are particularly described in the Appendix, where the account of the plates is given, and the MSS. mentioned from whence they are taken.

‡ Vide Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit. vol. II. p. 395.

§ Malmsh. de Gest. Pont. lib. 2.  
|| Ingulf Hist. Croyland.



The roofs of palaces, cathedral churches, and large monasteries, as well perhaps as those belonging to the houses of the greatest nobility, were covered either with sheets of lead, or shingles, or else slates, which latter appear to be most common in the ancient delineations; and, in general, the slates are cut rounding at the bottom, and laid one over the other, so that they somewhat resemble the scales of a fish\*. As the commoner sort of people could not purchase such expensive coverings, they were obliged to be content with thatch.

Coverings of the Anglo-Saxon buildings.

### CHAP. III.

#### *Art of War and Military Discipline of the Anglo-Saxons.*

WE have already seen, in the preceding volume, the ancient habits of the Anglo-Saxon soldiers: we shall now make some more particular enquiries into their methods of making war, and their military arrangement in battle. But it may not be impertinent, in the first place, to examine the manner in which they raised troops; who were qualified to bear arms; and who were the commanding officers according to the law.

Enquiry into the military discipline of the Anglo-Saxons.

Every one of those valiant followers of Hengist, and the other Saxon chiefs, who settled in Britain, upon their having subdued the natives, received each his share of the conquered land, which became his own and sole property, and subject to no kind of services whatever, but what the public safety absolutely required†. The first and chief thing required of him was, that he should attend personally and assist in the wars for the public defence; but if he refused to obey this requisite duty, he forfeited his estate, and became an object of contempt: so that in case of an invasion from the foreign enemy, or when the great council proposed any military expedition for the public emolument, every land-holder was obliged to obey the summons, and advance to save his country from the foe, or to promote its glory and wealth.

Who were soldiers at that period.

Every freeman who was of an age capable of bearing arms, and had not forfeited his privileges by any indiscretions, had a right to attend upon the war, so also might the Ceorls if their inclination lead them to fol-

Clergy and slaves forbid to bear arms.

\* See plate XVIII.

† These services were then called *Trimodis Necessitas*, and were attending personally in war for the public defence, and fortifying castles, and places of defence, and repairing bridges. Spel. Remains, p. 19. See also the first chapter of this part of

the present volume of this Chronicle. Nor were the crown lands, or those belonging to the church exempted; but the clergy usually performed this duty by substitutes, which were deemed sufficient, and these substitutes were generally the Ceorls that farmed their lands.

low a military employment; but they were not obliged by law to do so, unless upon some extraordinary danger or emergency. The military life was looked upon as honourable, therefore all slaves were prohibited bearing arms, unless some sudden or pressing occasion obliged the master to arm them for the immediate defence of his own life or property\*. In the days of paganism, the Anglo-Saxon priests were forbidden to ride on horseback, or to bear arms†; and the Christian clergy were also exempted from the performance of the duties of military business, that they might the better attend to their religious offices, and, indeed, in the latter times, they were forbidden to bear arms under severe penalties.

Officers of the  
Anglo-Saxons.

All such as were qualified to bear arms in a family, were constantly led to the battle by the master, or head of that family, and every tything, (or ten families,) were conducted by the borholder‡, or chief of that tything: the soldiers of every ten tythings, which formed a hundred, were led by the hundredary, or chief magistrate of the hundred; and as several hundreds formed a trything, so the soldiers of every hundred that composed the trything were under the conduct of the trythingman, or head of the trything, and the members of as many tythings as formed a shire, or county, were conducted by the alderman§ of that county; and the alderman, and his followers, were under the conduct of the king, or, in his absence, of his lieutenant||.

Every landholder  
obliged to  
be provided  
with arms.

That every landholder, and such of his family, as were able to bear arms, might, upon all occasions, be ready to defend their country, laws were made obliging them to be in constant possession of such arms as were necessary for them, and suitable to their rank. They were, by the same laws, strictly forbidden either to sell, lend, or pledge those arms, or even to alienate them from their heirs; also, that they might be expert in the management of them when they were called upon to serve their country, they had certain stated times for the military exercise, which was done under the direction of the superior magistrates; and once a year, generally about the month of May, a general review was made throughout every province, when each man was obliged to appear with his own proper arms, in order to prevent the public being imposed upon by some lending their arms to others, or the like impositions.

\* Willins Leg. Ang. Sax.

† An instance of this is given by Bede, who tells us, that Coifi, the pagan high priest of Northumberland, was thought by the people to be mad when they saw him mounted on a horse, with a spear in his hand, like a secular Thane; because (adds he) they knew it was unlawful for a priest to bear arms, or ride on horseback. Bede lib. i. c. 13.

‡ The Borholder, in his military capacity, was called *Sidcundman*, or *conduct*.

§ This officer, in his military capacity, was called *Denetoga*, or *general*.

|| In Saxon called *Cyninger polb*. Vide page 181 of this vol.

When-

Whenever the members of the Hundred Court assembled together, they met armed, and every one of them (as we before mentioned) touched the spear of the hundredary, or chief magistrate, declaring thereby their willingness to fight under his command\*. Indeed, the lance, and other arms, were such a necessary part of the dress of an Anglo-Saxon nobleman, that he was scarcely ever seen abroad without them, which well accounts for the various laws to prevent mischief being done by carrying arms in a careless manner †.

*Wappentac, its signification.*

The far greater part of the Anglo-Saxon forces were composed of their infantry, the cavalry being chiefly thanes, and such great men as could afford to purchase horses, and maintain them; although, on particular occasions, the Saxons may reasonably be thought to have varied the form of the arrangement of their armies; yet, in general, it is supposed that they drew up their infantry in the form of a wedge, whose point fronted the enemy; and that the cavalry, on either side, formed the wings, and assisted the infantry in the onset: nor was this a new method of arrangement, but the same as had been practised by their fore-fathers in Germany; and it was in this very form that Harold the second drew up his army, when he fought that memorable battle against William duke of Normandy at Hastings. At this period, the success of the battle depended solely on the superiority of the numbers, or the personal valour and discipline of the troops, and the good conduct of the leaders. We have, in a very ancient author, a short, but curious description of the famous battle of Brunanburh, where Æthelstan overthrew the joint forces of Constantine king of Scotland, Anlaf, the son of Sithric, and the king of Cumberland. The confederate army came down before break of day, intending to attack the camp of Æthelstan, and fell upon a party of soldiers belonging to the retinue of a bishop, who had pitched his tent there the preceding night, about a mile distant from the king's army; the soldiers of the bishop, not expecting any such assault, made what resistance they could, but in vain, for being oppressed by the number of their enemies, they were finally overthrown with great slaughter. The main army where Æthelstan was present, being in the mean time alarmed by the noise which the skirmish with the bishops troops had occasioned, were instantly drawn up in order of battle, and by break of day came down upon Anlaf, whose army over-wearied with the slaughter they had already made, was thrown into some disorder. Æthelstan led one body of the army in person, which was composed chiefly of the West Saxons, the other body he committed to the charge of his chancellor Turketull, which was made up of Mercians and Londoners. Against the king:

*The Anglo-Saxon forces, and their arrangement.*

\* Wilkins Leg. Ang. Sax. for this reason these meetings are sometimes known by the name of **peapun race**, or the

*Touch of Weapons.*

† Ibid.

fought

fought Anlaf, with his assistants, and Turketull was opposed by Constantine, with the Scottish army. The battle began by showers of missile weapons, as darts and javelins, but soon after both armies closed; the engagement was long and terrible, neither party giving way for a considerable time\*, until the chancellor Turketull, with some few Londoners of great valour, being joined by a captain of undaunted courage named Singin, who led the Worcestershire men, broke into the main body of their enemies, making way first through the Picts and Orkeners†, and then thro' the Cambrians and the Scots, and at last reached the place where Constantine, the king of the Scots, was fighting. Turketull unhorsed him, and used all means to take him alive; but he being well defended by the Scotch, Turketull would have been overcome, had he not been immediately assisted by Singin his faithful second, who, at the same time, slew Constantine. The rumour of this disaster being carried to Anlaf, he, with the remainder of his army left the field, and fled away with the utmost precipitation, but not without great loss.

The battle began with loud songs.

The Danes and other northern nations began the battle with loud songs, and continual shoutings, and this custom without doubt prevailed amongst our Anglo-Saxon ancestors at the battle of Hasting, in which William Duke of Normandy obtained the conquest over Harold. The Normans began the onset with singing aloud the songs of Rowland‡.

Many battles fought by the Saxons.

The Anglo-Saxons were well versed in the art of war, for the number of battles they fought from the time of their arrival, to the Norman conquest, is almost incredible. Ælfred himself, in the first year of his accession to the throne, is said to have fought no less than seven pitched battles, besides many skirmishes against the Danes§. What increased the misery of those unhappy times was, the insatiable cruelty of the conquering armies, who, not contented with the overthrow of such as opposed them in battle, would frequently destroy the weak and defenceless women, children and slaves.

Armour of the Anglo-Saxons.

The simplicity of the habit of the Saxon soldiers, as already mentioned||, was towards the latter end of the monarchy in some measure broken through. In the more early delineations, we cannot find that they wore the least kind of defensive armour upon their bodies, their whole confidence being placed in the small shield they bore upon their left arms; soon after, we find the shield gradually growing larger, and

\* The words of Ingulfus are—cessantibus citò ferentariis armis, pede pes, & cuspide cuspis, umboque umbone pellebatur. Cæsi multi mortales, confusaque cadavera regum & pauperum corruiebant. Ingulf Hist. Croyland.

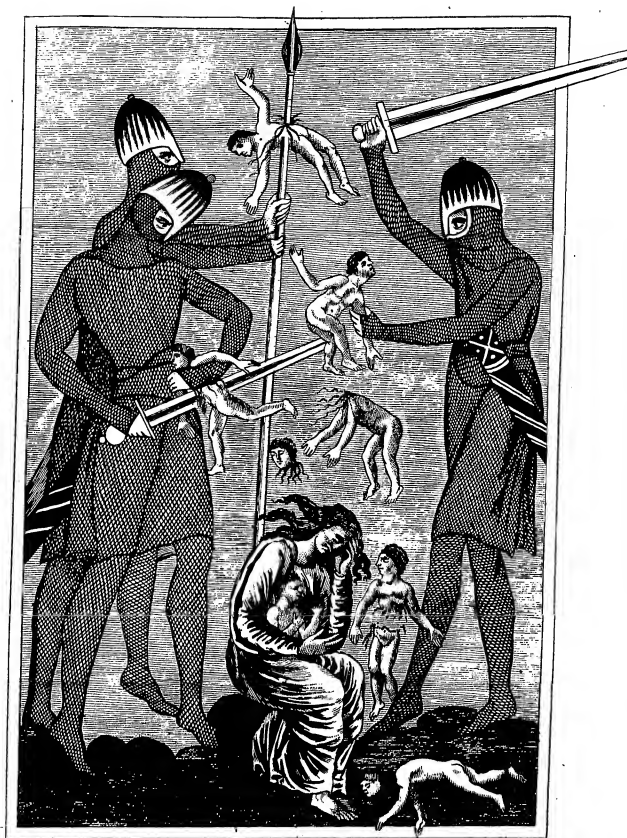
† Jam Orcadenfium ac Pictorum globos pertransierat, silvamque jaculorum & telorum quæ thorace fidelissima sustinuerat. Ibid.

‡ Malmfb. lib. 3. cap. 1.

§ Afferius vit. Ælfredi.

|| Vide vol I. p. 318.

the



the soldiers appear with helmets upon their heads, and their form such as has been already described. In the reign of king Æthelstan, the chieftains of the army wore a breast-plate\*, yet it is highly probable that this armour, as well as some which in the Saxon delineations appear like coats of mail, and cover the whole trunk of the body, were not in general use, but only worn by the nobility, and such great men as could afford to purchase them †.

During the reign of Cnut, and the succeeding Danish kings, the armour was greatly improved, the soldiers then began to wear compleat suits, which, from its appearance in the ancient manuscript delineations, appears to have been composed of leather, overlaid with a kind of net-work of strong wire, yet so contrived, as to render it pliable at the joints; and this armour not only covered the trunk of the body, but the arms, the legs, and the feet of the wearer, leaving only part of his hands bare; that he might the better grasp his spear, his sword or his shield. Besides this compleat suit of armour, the helmet also at this period underwent great improvement, for it seems not only to be made of iron or brass, but is also made high above the head, the better to sustain the shock of a violent blow; besides, a piece of iron, or other metal whereof the helmet was composed, was so contrived as to come down straight over the nose, in order to prevent the face receiving any injury from a cross cut of the enemies sword ‡.

And this sort of armour, seems to have become very common at the time of the Norman conquest, from the numbers of figures so clothed in the famous tapestry of Bayeux§. With regard to the cavalry of the Anglo-Saxons, although in some delineations they are seen riding on horses without either cruppers or stirrups, we must by no means conclude, that they knew not the use of those necessary accoutrements; for in several Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, of very early date, we find the horsemen well provided with both these particu-

\* Ingulph in his history of Croyland, in the account of the battle of Brunanburh, informs us, that Turkerull wore a breast-plate, see note † page 214 of this vol.

† Two figures habited in armour like coats of mail are given from a Sax. MS. in the work before quoted, entitled *Jonha Angelcynnian*, or the Manners and Customs of the English, vol. I. plate IV. fig. 6, 7, and on the same plate, is a very curious armour, worn by a king who is supposed to be fighting at the head of his troops. See the description of them in the same book, page 29, 30.

‡ See these soldiers represented from an Anglo-Danish MS. plate IV. of this volume.

§ This celebrated tapestry which is yet preserved in the cathedral church of Bayeux in Normandy, is said to have been the work of Matilda, wife to William the Conqueror, and represents in needle-work, the history of the conquest of England by William, and ends with the death of Harold, at the battle of Hastings. Vide Montfaucon's *Monarchie Francoise*, tom. 1 & 2.

lars\*. The Saxon spurs have no rowel, but only a sharp point; in other particulars, they do not differ much in shape or size from those used in the present day †.

Tents, standards, &c. of the Anglo-Saxons.

The encampments of the Saxons having already been mentioned, and the form of their tents, as they appear in ancient delineations ‡, any further description of them here would therefore be unnecessary; the offensive arms of the Anglo-Saxons, were large swords, and long spears, to these the Danes added the battle-axe §. Every different body of troops that composed the Anglo-Saxon army, had their several standards, which in form were not widely different from those used by the cavalry at present ¶; these standards had various figures wrought or embroidered upon them, and were highly esteemed, especially in the days of Paganism. The Danes in particular, had one, (in which they placed a superstitious faith) richly embroidered, having upon it the figure of a raven, and was said to have been the work of the three daughters of Lothbroc, the sisters of Hingwar and Hubba, which standard was taken from them when their army was overcome, and their chieftain, Hubba, slain by the men of Devonshire, A. D. 878. Some of our ancient Anglo-Saxon kings had standards born before them, as they rode from place to place throughout their territories, even in time of peace ¶, and sometimes the military standard of a king was after his death laid carefully upon his tomb\*\*.

#### C H A P. IV.

##### *State of Agriculture amongst the Anglo-Saxons, after the Union of the Heptarchy.*

Agriculture neglected, and why.

WE have already considered the state of agriculture amongst the Anglo-Saxons, during the Heptarchy, so that the less remains to be said in the present chapter. At that time we saw how very low the rent of farms were, from whence it may be reasonably concluded, that agriculture was not in a very flourishing state, and the dreadful

\* See vol I. of the *possa Angel-cynnan* above-quoted, plate IV. fig. 1. plate XI. fig. 2. plate XVII. fig. 6.

† See one of these spurs delineated, plate XVII. of this volume.

‡ See plate XI. of the first volume of this Chronicle.

§ This weapon was frequently not unlike a common ax, only longer and smaller; sometimes it was double-edged, then it was styled by the historians the *bipennis*, and at

the battle of Hastings, the front foldiers of Harold's army were armed with these axes, as Malmſbury has assured us. Malmſb. lib. 3. See various sorts of these double-edged axes in the work above quoted of the Manners and Customs of the English, vol. I. plate XXII.

¶ See their form plate XVII. of this volume.

¶ Bede Ecc. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 16.

\*\* Ibid. lib. 3. cap. 17.

troubles

troubles and calamities that followed, from the frequent invasion of the Danes in the succeeding times of the monarchy, and which kept the chief landholders almost continually under arms for the defence of the country, must greatly have impeded the making any very material improvements in this useful art. This neglect of agriculture was undoubtedly the great occasion of the famines that succeeded unfruitful years; for so little attention could be paid to the cultivation of land, that they seemed only to have taken care to sow as much as might suffice for the succeeding season, without any intention of procuring a reserve in case of necessity, so that when an unfavourable season destroyed their crops, or when they were trampled down by their enemies, which was frequently the case, the miseries that ensued for want of provisions were truly dreadful; thus, in the year 1043, a quarter of wheat was sold for sixty Saxon pennies\*, which exorbitant price must have greatly distressed not only the poor, but even those of a middling rank; and this was the cause, together with the scarcity of money, that the purchase of land at this period was so remarkably low; for at or near Ely, about the reign of king Eadger the Peaceable, an acre of the best land, upon an average, was valued at only sixteen Saxon pennies†, but, perhaps, as the East-Angles was one of the parts of England that suffered most from the Danes, and was at this very time partly possessed by that rude people, this price ought not to be considered as the average rate of land throughout the kingdom, especially in Wessex, where the outrages of the Danes had not been so sharply felt. About the same time, and at the same part of the kingdom, the price of a sheep was one Saxon shilling, and of a good horse, ten shillings of the same money: thus we see, that four sheep would purchase one acre of the best land, and one horse three acres‡.

The great scarcity of provisions, and the various necessities of life which frequently afflicted the Saxons during the present period, is considered by several authors as a strong proof of a scanty population; and indeed such arguments seem to carry great weight with them. The general prices of provisions at this time were undoubtedly often changed, according to the produce of the season, and affected by many other various accidents. In the reign of Æthelstan, a good ram was said to have been worth four-pence§, and in the laws of Æthelred the Unready, who reigned from A. D. 979, to A. D. 1016, the prices to be paid for the following animals were ascertained, if they

\* Sixty Saxon pennies was equal in weight of silver, to about 15 or 16 of our shillings, and were equal in value to seven or eight pounds of our money.

† Equal to four or five shillings of our money; here we may add that the above average price of land is taken from the

various estimates recorded in the Ancient History of Ely Church, published by J. Gale. Hist. Brit. XV. Script. &c. t. i. p. 477, &c.

‡ Ibid.

§ Leges Æthelstani.



were destroyed by any one; and it is with the greatest reason that we may conclude them to be the average price by which those animals might be purchased at market; they are as follows. For a horse thirty Saxon shillings \*; a mare or colt twenty shillings †; a wild boar, twelve shillings ‡; an ox, six shillings §; a cow at four and twenty pence ||; a swine, eight pence ¶; a sheep, one shilling \*\*; a goat, two-pence ††.

The art of gardening.

We have sufficient evidence that gardens were cultivated at this period, and that the art of planting fruit-trees, and ingrafting them, was also well understood, but more particularly amongst the monks who were very assiduous in their rural labours. Their gardens were not only stocked with such sort of herbs and trees as were useful, but ornament and pleasure was frequently considered ††; and these, as well as their orchards, were disposed in such manner as to afford amusement to the mind, as well as food for the support of the body. In what manner their gardens or orchards were laid out, or their rules for planting, with variety of other particulars relative to them, are not to be discovered at this distance of time, not only from the silence of ancient historians upon these heads, but also because nothing of the sort capable of giving any satisfaction can be derived from the manuscript delineations.

Instruments of husbandry seem to have been improved.

Though agriculture was neglected at this period, yet in the delineations of the more modern Anglo-Saxon artists, some improvements were made in the instruments of husbandry. The plough in particular had a second handle added to it, which must have made it more convenient and useful. The form and nature of their other implements of husbandry, as scythes, rakes, sickles, carts, &c. will be far better understood, by being represented to the eye as given by the Saxons themselves, than by the most elaborate description §§.

\* Equal in sterling money to 1l. 15s. 2d.

† Equal to 1l. 3s. 5d. sterling.

‡ Fourteen shillings and one penny, sterling.

§ Seven shillings and one halfpenny, sterling.

|| Five and six-pence, sterling.

¶ One shilling and ten-pence halfpenny, sterling.

\*\* One shilling and two-pence, sterling.

†† Five-pence halfpenny, sterling. Vide Leges Æthelredi, apud Wilkins et Lambard.

§§ The author of the Ancient History of Ely cathedral informs us, that Brithnod, first abbot there, was very skilful in the art of planting and gardening; and to

make the place more beautiful, he surrounded it with plantations, and laid out a very extensive garden, with an orchard, filled with a vast variety of shrubs and fruit-trees, which being skilfully managed and engrafted, in a few years grew up to such perfection, that at a distance the orchard looked like a wood loaded with abundance of excellent fruit, which made no little addition to the beauty and agreeableness of the place. Hist. Elien. a T. Gale Edditt.

§§ See the most material instruments of husbandry represented upon plate V. of this volume; for a more particular account, see the Appendix.



It is almost certain that at this period, there were water-mills in England, as may appear from a prodigious number of charters, where-<sup>Mills in Eng-land.</sup> in mills are mentioned as standing near to rivers and bridges. These low situations would have been very inconvenient for windmills, which however seem also to have been known to the Anglo-Saxons, and sometimes are mentioned in the charters, but not so frequently as the former, which is a good argument that they were not so common. The form and construction of these ancient watermills would be esteemed a very curious acquisition, but unhappily no such thing can be traced from their delineations, or any description be found in the ancient historians, so that nothing satisfactory can be said upon that head.

## C H A P. V.

*Navigation and Commerce of the Anglo-Saxons, from the Accession of Egbert to the Norman Conquest.*

**T**O those obstructions or restraints upon a free trade mentioned in the former volume, the following, and perhaps not one of the <sup>least</sup>, may be added, namely, the granting to the king a certain portion of the price of all commodities bought or sold within his dominions, if that price amounted to more than twenty-pence, and this was one of the chief reasons that all bargains of sale above that value were ordered to be made within the gates of a town, and in the presence of the sheriff or portgrieve, whose office it was to collect this duty, which continued to be exacted to the end of the present period\*.

If such laws as those above referred to, are to be considered as <sup>essential</sup> obstructions to commerce, the following institutions were certainly well calculated to promote and encourage an internal trade, namely weekly markets, and anniversary fairs. In the early days of Christianity, amongst the Anglo-Saxons, weekly markets were generally appointed to be held on a Sunday, that the people might have convenient opportunity of purchasing what they wanted, at the same time they assembled together to perform religious worship; but it was soon found that this mixture of religious and secular affairs was productive of great irregularities, and hurtful to the true cause of religion itself. To reform these proceedings, many laws were

\* In Domesday book, it appears that a certain portion of every thing bought or sold in the borough of Lewis, in Suffex, was to be paid to the portrieve, one half by the seller, and the other half by the buyer; and particularly four-pence was to be paid him for every man sold within the borough. Scriptores Brit. apud Gale, p. 762.

made to prevent the holding weekly markets upon the Sunday as had been usual, but it was some time before the custom could be entirely abolished, as may appear from the frequent repetition of these laws, and the severity of the fines which at last extended so far as not only to exact a certain mulct, but further ordered that all the goods exposed to sale upon the Sunday, should also be forfeited \*; and at the same time the market day was changed from Sunday to Saturday, so that all such as lived at a distance, and had occasion to come to the market, might also attend divine service the day following, if they were so inclined; and this was a matter of great consequence to them, when we consider how few churches there were in England at this time, and the great distance they stood at from each other.

*Origin of fairs.* The yearly fairs were also appointed to be held near some cathedral church or monastery, upon the anniversary of the saint to whom such church or monastery was dedicated; the first institution of these meetings was for a religious purpose, and it was then usual for the people from the neighbouring villages to assemble the evening preceding the saints-day, to go into the church to watch and pray, during the night †; but, as the concourse of people gradually increased, petty merchants and pedlars who had goods to dispose of, attended also to vend them amongst the multitude, so that by degrees those religious meetings were broke in upon by affairs of a secular nature, and at last became meer scenes of licentiousness and debauchery, which, being offensive to the clergy, all nocturnal attendance was forbidden, and the people appointed to meet in the day-time, when a regular fair was held, to which were wont to repair not only the people of the village, in which the church or monastery stood, but others from neighbouring parishes, amounting to a prodigious number, especially if the saint was held in great repute and veneration. If the saint's day happened to fall during the time of harvest; that the people might not be induced to leave their necessary labours, the fair was ordered to be held on the following Sunday. The abuse of this custom, however soon became offensive to the clergy, who failed not to preach severely against these assemblies on the sabbath-day, but notwithstanding all their endeavours, they were not entirely abolished, till a considerable time after the end of the Saxon monarchy ‡.

\* Spelman's Concil. Brit. vol. I. p. 377. 404. 450. et alia.

† And hence these nocturnal meetings were called *wake's*, from the people's watching or *waking*, and the name continued to be given to the meetings by day, after the original custom of *waking* was laid aside.

See a work entitled *Donba Angelcynnann*, or the Manners and Customs of the English. Vol. II. pag. 98, and vol. 3. p. 179.

‡ Vide the Manners and Customs of the English, as above.

The union of the Heptarchy must certainly be considered as a circumstance highly favourable to the internal trade of the nation, since an end was thereby put to the continual wars and disputes that subsisted between the two several states, and this advantage would undoubtedly have been productive of happy consequences, had it not been overbalanced by the obstruction put upon their foreign trade by the cruel and frequent invasions of the Danes, who, in a few years, made themselves masters of the sea, and plundered every merchantship that fell in their hands. We may readily suppose, that Egbert himself but more especially his three eldest sons, could not but be thoroughly sensible of the misfortunes they laboured under in not having a fleet sufficiently powerful to defend their coasts, and protect the foreign trade; but then the vast difficulty of raising such a fleet ought to be considered. At this time the navy itself was fallen into decay, and few mariners were to be procured skillful enough to work the ships in case they had been in possession of them. Yet, amidst all these manifest disadvantages, Ælfred the Great, the best of all our Anglo-Saxons kings, formed the design, soon after his accession to the throne, of putting the Anglo-Saxons in the way of disputing with the Danes the mastery of the sea, where they had long reigned invincible.

We may easily be convinced of the low state of the navy when Ælfred first formed this design, for in the space of four years, he could not get together any more than five or six small vessels, with which he put to sea in person, A. D. 875, and overcame seven of the Danish ships, taking one, and chasing the rest away\*; but the troubles that succeeded upon the back of this victory were so numerous, that this great prince was obliged for a time to neglect the maritime affairs, and pay all his attention to the defence of the kingdom by land; but after the justly famous victory which he obtained over the Danes of Etheldune, A. D. 878, he pursued his favourite scheme with redoubled assiduity, and having persuaded the conquered Danes to embrace Christianity, he assigned them lands in the kingdom of the East Angles, and made it their interest to defend that country they formerly came to plunder. Assisted by them, who had many ships, and were excellent mariners, he fitted out a very powerful fleet, with which he encountered the other Danish fleets, with various success. At this time, many of his own natural subjects, under the instructions of the confederate Danes, acquired skill in the art of navigating ships of war†.

Nor did this great monarch stop here: he also invited foreign sailors into his service, whom he rewarded very bountifully, and gave every other possible encouragement to navigation and commerce. Thus, in a few years, he raised a navy sufficiently potent to guard the sea coasts, and protect the foreign trade: he also repaired the sea port towns, and

\* Chron. Sax. After. &c.

† After. vit. Ælfredi.

part-

Commerce re-  
stored by king  
Ælfred.

Ælfred im-  
proves the navy

Sea port towns  
repaired.

particularly London, which had long been the famous resort for merchants: besides this, he introduced new manufactures, and furnished many things for exportation.

*Ships made on a new construction.* The ships used by the Anglo-Saxons, at this period, were called keels or cogs, and they were clumsily built, being low, short and broad, which made them very hard to work, and slow sailors. These disadvantages Ælfred took into consideration, and caused others, A. D. 897, to be built upon a different construction, according to an invention of his own. These new vessels were twice as long as the keels, and much higher, which not only made them more beautiful in appearance, but also much more commodious for either war or commerce; for they sailed much swifter, and, at the same time, their motion in the water was more steady and certain. Some of these vessels had sixty oars, and some more, so that they could not be very small\*.

*Foreign sailors encouraged.* When Ælfred had thus prudently secured the sea coasts of his kingdom, and afforded such protection to foreign trade, he then proceeded to give great encouragement to such foreigners as were in his service, and also to his own subjects to undertake voyages, and to make discoveries both north and south.

*Ochter's voyage to the north.* One of these voyages was undertaken by Ochter, a Norwegian. He afterwards related his success to king Ælfred, who took the pains to transcribe it from his own mouth †. Ochter herein gives an account of his sailing from his own country, which was North of all the Normans, and proceeded beyond where the whale fisheries were accustomed to go. He also relates his touching upon the coasts of the Finns and the Bearms, and his ending his voyage at the mouth of a great river, with variety of particulars extremely curious, though foreign from the present subject. The river, where Ochter finished his voyage, is thought to be the same with the Dwina, upon whose banks the city of Archangel was long afterwards built. The Bearms were the inhabitants of the country anciently known by the name of Beormland, and probably lay upon the eastern banks of the Dwina. Hence we may see, that, even at this early period, when the art of navigation was so very imperfect, Ælfred had acquired a greater knowledge of the northern seas and land than any Englishman for more than 650 years after his death ‡.

*Wulfstan's voyage to the North.* Another voyage was undertaken in the life time of king Ælfred by one Wulfstan, an Anglo-Saxon, who, at the desire of that prince, set

\* Chron. Sax. sub ann. 897.

† This voyage is preserved in the Cotton Library, and it was first published with a Latin version at the end of Walker's Latin translation of Spelman. Vit. Ælfredi.

‡ Capt. Richard Chancellor was the first European navigator who discovered the White Sea and the river Dwina, A.D. 1553, from the time of Ælfred. Anderson's Hist. of Commerce, vol. 1. p. 386.

fail from Sleswic in order to explore the coasts of the Baltic, with the countries that are bordering upon that sea \*. He made a discovery of Langaland, Zealand, Falster and Sconen, all countries belonging to Denmark. From thence he sailed to Bergendaland †, which had a king of its own; and from thence to Blekinga, Meora ‡, Ocland, and Gothland on the left, which belonged to the Sweons §; and afterwards coasted about Weonadland ||, making many curious observations concerning the countries, the rivers, the people, and their manners. Whether the design of Ælfred, in promoting these discoveries of the northern countries, was purely commercial, or whether he might have meditated any military expedition into those ports, cannot, at this distance of time, be discovered.

Ælfred was equally as assiduous in opening a communication with the southern world as he had been in his discoveries towards the north. He kept a correspondence with Abel, patriarch of Jerusalem, and, through his means, might likely receive information of various important particulars. He also sent one Sighelm, an Anglo-Saxon priest, with relief to the Christians, who were settled at St. Thomas's at Meleapour on the Coromandel coast in hither India, which voyage Sighelm performed, and returning back, brought with him a quantity of jewels of a new kind, and such as had never before been seen in England ¶. We are certain, besides, that Ælfred was possessed of great quantities of the most precious productions of the east, which is a striking proof of a large and flourishing trade\*\*.

After the decease of Ælfred, the former part of the reign of his son Edward was taken up by the disturbances of the rebellious Danes, who broke from their allegiance, and harraressed the kingdom. However, he not only secured his dominions by land, by erecting strong castles, and places of defence, by which means the enemies were at last reduced, but carefully kept an hundred ships at sea to protect the trade and guard the coasts ††. Æthelstan, his son, who succeeded him, A. D. 925, took still more pains to increase the fleet, and made trade a road to honour: for, by one of his laws, he decreed, that if any mariner or merchant so prospered as to make three voyages over the high seas in a ship and cargo of his own, he should thenceforth be

State of trade under Edward the Elder and Æthelstan.

\* A short journal of this voyage is also extant, taken down, as it is said, by king Ælfred, from the voyager's own description. Vita Ælfredi Mag. Appendix, p. 207.

† Perhaps *Bornholm*.

‡ Perhaps *Morby*.

§ *Sweeter*.

|| This is the name he gave to the whole coast of Germany washed by the Baltic.

¶ Malmshury informs us, that in his

days many of these jewels were to be seen amongst the treasures of the church of Sherborne, of which Sighelm was made bishop upon his return from India. Malm. de gest. Pontiff. Angl. lib. 2.

\*\* Asserius tells us, that king Ælfred one morning gave him a fine silk robe, and as much frankincense, (*incense*) as a man could carry. Asser. Vit. Ælfredi.

†† Chron. Sax. &c.

advanced to the dignity of a thane, and entitled to the same privileges\*; and, also, the further to facilitate and encourage commerce, he established mints in such large towns as enjoyed any considerable foreign trade. The principal of these towns were the following: London, Canterbury, Winchester, Rochester, Exeter, Lewis, Hastings, Chichester, Southampton, Wareham, and Shaftesbury†. By these, and other prudent means, the state of trade was considerably improved during the reign of this prince.

State of commerce during the reign of Eadgar.

From the time of the decease of Æthelstan to the accession of Eadgar, nothing material relative to commerce appears to have been done; but the spirit of trade, however, continued to increase, so that Eadgar was enabled to make a more powerful appearance at sea than any one of his predecessors; but, it is probable, not so great as the monkish authors would have us believe, who talk of his having no less than three thousand six hundred, or four thousand sail of ships, an incredible number to have been so soon collected together after the deplorable state the navy was in, not so much as a century before‡. In short, it appears that Eadgar, being a great favourite with the monks, they took all occasions of augmenting his grandeur; but thus much may with certainty be depended upon, that he had not only a very large fleet, but also that he kept them in excellent order, and caused them to be so properly stationed as to guard the sea coasts from all surprise, and effectually protect the trade. In order to facilitate commerce, he caused an excellent law to be made, that all the money, coined in the kingdom, should be of one kind, which should not be refused in payments; and also that the measures used at Winchester should be the standards of all the measures used throughout his dominions. If these laws were beneficial to commerce, the following may perhaps seem to lay it under some restraint, one of which was, that in all large towns, twenty three honest men should be chosen, and in all smaller towns, twelve, to be witnesses to all bargains made in the same town, and that no man should buy or sell any thing, but before two or more sworn witnesses. Another law enacts, that when a member of a tything went to a distant market, he should before he set out acquaint the tything-man, or borsholder, what he intended to buy or sell, and also

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 71.

† Leges Æthelstani, cap. 14.

‡ From this prodigious number of ships said to have been in the navy, some authors have been led to think that the transcribers of the ancient records may, by some mistake or other, have added a cypher to the original number, and by that means made it ten times as great as it really was. If the number of ships was only 3000, such a fleet would on a moderate computation,

require no fewer than 300,000 sailors to navigate it, which must have far exceeded the number of mariners then in the kingdom; and to favour the above supposition of a cypher being added, we may refer to the authority of Thorn, the ancient historian of Canterbury, who makes the number only 300, which is a great many, and shews how much they were increased from 100, the full complement during the reign of Edward the Elder.

when



when he returned, declare to him what he had bought or sold; these laws, though good in themselves, must certainly have been very troublesome in the execution\*.

In the reign of Æthelred the second, commonly called the Unready, the maritime affairs were so much neglected, that the Danes began afresh to commit their usual depredations, so that for the want of a proper and well-managed fleet to protect the sea-coasts, the foreign trade was greatly hurt. But, afterwards, in the year 1008, when the deluded people began to see the error in leaving their sea-coasts unguarded, a law was made, commanding the proprietors of every 310 hydes of land, to furnish one ship for the royal navy, and in consequence of this order, a fleet of ships was raised, amounting to 800 sail †, which is a certain proof that the mariners and merchants, notwithstanding the great distress of the nation, had not abandoned it or neglected the foreign trade, for without their assistance it would have been impossible to have collected so large a fleet together in so small a time, and to have manned them as they ought to be ‡.

Several good laws were made in the reign of Æthelred, as well for the security of the effects, as the persons of merchants, when by contrary winds they were obliged to put into English harbours, or were wrecked upon the coasts, which is a sufficient proof of the encouragement given to foreign commerce, and from the laws made in the wittenagemot, held at Wantage (in which amongst other things the rates of customs to be paid on the importation of various goods at the wharf of Bellins gate, at London are ascertained) it appears that a society of German merchants resided at London, called Emperor's men, who paid to the king twice a year (viz. at Christmas and Easter) for his protection, two pieces of grey cloth, one piece of brown cloth, ten pounds of pepper, five pair of gloves, and two casks of wine †.

After the accession of king Cnut to the throne of England, (which put a final stop to the cruel wars that had so long subsisted between the Danes and the English;) trade began again to flourish, and such was the repute of that prince, and the tranquillity of the times, that he found it necessary to keep only forty ships at sea to protect the trade and guard the sea coasts, and this number was also soon after reduced to sixteen. He had such influence with foreign princes, that he obtained of them several privileges for the encouragement of his trading sub-

\* Wilkins Leg. Sax. Reg. Ædgari.

† Chron. Sax. sub. an. 1008.

‡ Leges Æthelredi apud Bromton.  
These merchants were probably the same

company so well known afterwards by the name of *Merchants of the Steel-yard*. Vide Dr. Hen. Hist. Brit.

jects \*. Under these favourable auspices, trade flourished so greatly, that the merchants of London acquired a much greater influence in public concerns than they had been formerly known to possess, for it plainly appears, that they had a great hand in placing Harold, the son of Cnut upon his father's throne, being present, and assisting at the wittenagemot, convened at Oxford for that purpose †.

State of trade  
till the Norman  
Conquest.

The sixteen ships that Cnut had kept at sea for the protection of the coasts, during his reign, were supported at a moderate expence; but his successor, Harold, raised the wages of the sailors, giving to every common man, eight mancuses ‡, and to every commander, twelve mancuses yearly, out of which they were to provide themselves with every necessary, this it is certain, at that time, must have been considered as a very liberal allowance. But Hardicnut, who succeeded Harold, raised the number of ships to sixty, and gave the same wages to all the mariners as his predecessor had done; the payment of which occasioned so severe a tax to be levied upon the people, as became the subject not only of great murmuring, but of some tumult §; from this period to the death of Harold the second, A. D. 1066, the naval power and commerce of the kingdom gradually increased, and was, upon the arrival of the duke of Normandy, in a very flourishing state. It is true indeed, that it is impossible to make any certain guess at the number of ships in England at this period, or of their general size, but, with regard to the number, we may be well assured that it was greatly increased, and also that many of them were large and commodious.

Form of the  
Saxon ships  
considered.

The form of the Anglo-Saxon ships, according to their appearance in the ancient manuscript delineations, has already been given in the preceding volume; the representations of which spare all further description of them. In the reign of king Cnut, if we can implicitly believe the accounts of a very ancient author, we shall find the ships were much more elegant and striking than those we have already represented. "So great (says the author above-mentioned) was the beauty and splendor of his (Cnut's) fleet, that at the same time that it dazzled the eyes of the spectators, it struck a

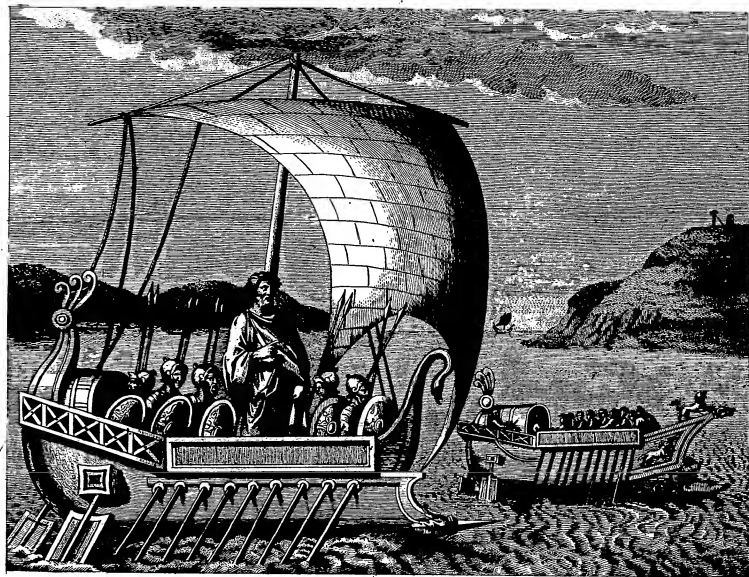
\* This himself declares in his own letter sent from Rome to the English nobility. "The emperor Rodolf, and other princes have consented, that all my subjects, merchants as well as those who travelled on account of religion, should not be interrupted on their way, but protected without paying any toll. W. Malmf. lib. 2. c. 11.

† The Saxon Chronicle informs us, that amongst the number of nobility then present, were the *seamen of London*, and by joint consent, Harold was there chosen to

be king of England. These *seamen of London* that at this time were members of the wittenagemot, were probably such merchants as had made three voyages beyond sea with their own ships and cargo, and by that means acquired the dignity and privileges of thanes. Vide Chron. Sax. sub an. 1035.

‡ A mancuse was worth about seven shillings and a penny, sterling.

§ Chron. Sax. et Malmf. lib. 2. cap. 12.



terror into their hearts; the rays of the sun reflected from their polished shields; the shining arms of the soldiers, and the sides of the ships, which were richly gilt with gold and silver, formed a sight as terrible, as it was magnificent; on the top of every mast was the gilded figure of a bird, which turning on a spindle, discovered from what point the winds blew. The stems of the ships were adorned with various figures, cast in metal, and gilt with gold or silvered; on one was seen the image of a man, whose menacing countenance made him look as if alive; on another, was a most terrible lion of gold; on a third, a dragon of burnished brass; and on a fourth, a fierce bull, whose horns were gilt, and in the act as if to rush on the affrighted beholders." Such, with some passages of admiration, is the description given of this formidable fleet by a co-temporary writer \*, and we have only to lament that no delineations whatever of any of these magnificent ships are handed down to posterity, by comparing which, with the words of the author, we might the better judge of the impartiality of his encomiums. It were to be wished that the representations (which accompany this chapter) of a large sailing ship, and the row-galley could compensate for the deficiency we have just noticed †. These are from a very ancient manuscript copy of Virgil, written and illuminated at Rome, which if we may rely on the general report, is almost a thousand years old ‡, and without doubt are exact representations of the vessels used at Rome at the time the delineations were made; as their form seems much more commodious than those of the Anglo-Saxons given in the former volume, it may not perhaps be thought inconsistent if we suppose, that as a frequent intercourse was kept up between the Anglo-Saxons and the people of Rome, they might in the more advanced state of navigation borrow from them such improvements as were necessary in the construction of their vessels. We may here observe indeed, that the figures in the sailing ship are considerably too large for its size, but this fault the ancient artists constantly ran into in their delineation and bass reliefs, where may be frequently seen, cities inhabited by people, whose heads rise above the tops of the houses, disproportions of which sort they seldom paid any great regard to, and which by no means hinders both the building and the figure to be in every other respect exact representations of the things they were intended for. §

Of the articles which were imported and exported by the merchants <sup>Exports.</sup> of this period, very little can be said, or few additions made to those which are already mentioned in the former volume. One great article of exportation amongst the Anglo-Saxons, was slaves, in which kind

\* Author of the *Encomium Emmæ*.

† See plate VI. of this vol.

‡ This MS. is in the Vatican library at Rome, and all the delineations were engraved and published by that excellent

artist *Barthol.*, to whose industry we owe the engravings of the Trajan and Antonine Columns, the *Admirandi Roman.* and several other valuable works.

of traffic the Northumbers in particular were very famous, amongst whom it continued for some time after the Norman conquest \*; the people of Bristol were also very much employed in the slave trade, which they pursued with such eagerness, that they frequently spared not their nearest relations; but at last they were prevailed upon by the preaching and exhortation of Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, (who possessed that see at the time of the conquest) to quit so barbarous and inhuman a traffic †. Horses also were amongst the articles exported by the Anglo-Saxons, and it seems that such numbers of them were sent abroad, that in the reign of Æthelstan, a law was found necessary to prohibit the exportation of horses, but such as were presents ‡.

Imports.

Books, which were excessive dear at this period, certainly formed a part, and that perhaps not very inconsiderable, of the imports, especially in the early time of the heptarchy, and upon the first conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, and if in the after ages when they began to write themselves, and transcribe the most useful authors, this article might become less consequential, another was quickly found to supply its place, which was less useful, though equally esteemed, such as the relics of saints with their images and pictures, which bore a vast price, and were manufactured chiefly at Rome, from whence they were disposed of to the deluded multitude, who were as highly pleased as they were wretchedly deluded by their purchase. The various habits for the clergy, the vessels for the celebration of the holy offices, with a great variety of other things at this time held necessary for most of the religious ceremonies, might also be considered as articles of foreign importation. Precious stones, gold, silver, silk, linen, spices, drugs, and other precious productions of the east, were also imported from the city of Italy, whither, if an English ceorl went three times, and returned back with his cargo to England, he obtained the dignity of a thane. Various other merchandises were also imported at this period, as wines from France and Spain; cloths from Germany and Flanders; furs, deer skins, whale oil and ropes, &c. from Scandinavia §; after all, however, it appears, that the balance of trade was in favour of England, otherwise it would have been impossible for the inhabitants to have raised such vast sums of money as were from time to time exacted of them, and carried out of the kingdom.

\* Malmsh. lib. 1. c. 3.

† Vita Wulfstani apud Anglia sacra, tom. 2. p. 256.

‡ Leges Æthelstani apud Wilkins, vel

Lambard.

§ Anderson's Hist. of Commerce, vol. I. p. 52.

## C H A P. VI.

*The Art of working Metals, and the coinage of the Anglo-Saxon Kings.*

THE art of working metals of all sorts, as we have seen in the former volume, was well understood by the Anglo-Saxons during the time of the heptarchy\*, so that we shall not be surprized to hear that they were carried to some degree of perfection during the monarchy. The chief smith, of all other artists, was held in the highest estimation at this period; his office and dignity was great in the king's court, where he enjoyed several privileges, and his were-gyld was higher than that of any other artificer; this may be easily accounted for, when we recollect, that to the smith belonged the fabricating not only their arms, but a vast variety of other necessary utensils both for the use and conveniency of life. Some of these artists arrived at such perfection, that the arms or utensils made by them were particularly regarded, as may appear in several wills of the Anglo-Saxon princes and nobles, where the name of the maker is often put to the arms bequeathed, in order to make the gift more estimable†. At this period, the smith's employment seems by no means to have confined him to the working in iron alone, the working in gold, in silver, in brass, and every other metal, appear to have been but different branches of his profession, and the clergy themselves (for they were all obliged to learn some mechanic art) were not the least skilful in these works, for even the celebrated St. Dunstan, understood the art of working metals, whether gold, silver, iron, or brass, in the greatest perfection; and the things that he made, he sometimes ornamented with images and letters, which he engraved thereon‡.

Though all these arts were understood in some degree during the heptarchy, yet it is certain they received considerable improvement in the reign of Ælfred the Great, who invited a great number of foreign artists into his kingdom, and amongst the rest were undoubtedly some who excelled in the working of metals, by whose instruc-

\* Vol. I. part V. chap. VI. p. 338.

† Thus in the will of prince Æthelstan, son to king Æthelred the second, made A. D. 1015, we find bequeathed to the church at Winchester his "silver hilted sword, which Walfrike made, and his gilt pouch and bracelet, which the said Walfrike also made." The original of this will in the Anglo-Saxon language is in the

possession of Thomas Astle, Esq. who politely communicated it to the author.

‡ Osborn, his biographer, says of him as follows: "Præterea manu aptus ad omnia, posse facere picturam, literas formare sculpsello imprimere, ex auro, argento, ære & ferro quicquid liberet operari." Anglia Sacra, tom. 2. p. 94.

tions, and the encouragement of that great prince, the English artisans soon arrived at a great degree of perfection, and before the end of this period, the works of the Anglo-Saxon goldsmiths were held in the greatest esteem, not only at home, but also upon the continent. The shrines or caskets they made for the preservation of the relics of saints, which they very curiously ornamented with gold, silver and precious stones, were, in particular, universally admired\*.

A curious ornament belonging to Ælfred.

It were greatly to be wished, that sufficient number of the works of the artists of that period were at this time to be produced, by which a compleater judgment might be formed of the perfection they arrived at. There is yet in being a valuable jewel, made of gold, richly ornamented with a foliage, and a kind of work like filligree: in the midst of it is the figure of a man holding two branches†. This figure is expressed only by a thin outline which is upon an enamelled ground, and over the figure is set in a piece of fine chrystal, and round the border of the chrystal are letters which import that the jewel itself was made at the command of Ælfred; the back part of the jewel is also ornamented with foliage, and very skilfully engraved‡. Many conjectures have been made concerning the use of this curious relic; but the most probable appears to be, that it was a personal ornament which king Ælfred used to wear§. It was discovered at Ethelngrey in Somersetshire, where that prince concealed himself during his great distress, and where he also frequently resided in his prosperity. The workmanship of this jewel is much beyond what we might expect to have seen at this early period, and fully confirms the accounts preserved in history of the perfection the art of working metals is said to have arrived at; but we need not have doubted, had we not luckily had the proof just mentioned, that the workers of gold and silver must have been skilful from the great demand there was for utensils and personal ornaments of every kind made of that metal, which we shall find hereafter were in general use||.

Art of making gold and silver thread, &c. known at this time.

Nor were the abovementioned branches of working metals the only arts of that kind that were understood in the period we are now treating of; for we have the fullest proof that they were well acquainted with the making gold and silver thread for the ladies to work with in embroidery. They also not only gilded metals in great perfection, but beat the gold and silver into thin leaves, which they used for gild-

\* They were called abroad by way of eminence, *Opera Anglica*, English works. Murat. Antiq. tom. 2.

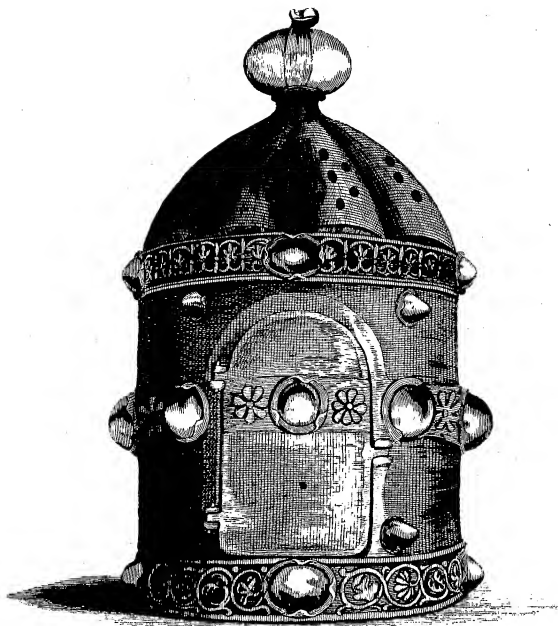
† Thought to be the image of Saint Cuthbert.

‡ See two views of this jewel, plate XVI. of this volume, which are the exact size of the original, which is preserved at

the Museum at Oxford. See the explanation of the writing in the Appendix, where the plates are particularly described.

§ Hicceſii Theſau. vol. 1. p. 142. Philosophical Transactions, No. 247. Wotton's Cospectus, p. 18. &c. &c.

|| See the following chapter on dress and habit.





ing wood\*, and in their manuscripts to adorn and ornament them. There is now extant a beautiful manuscript †, written in the reign of king Eadgar, and dated A. D. 966, in which is a picture representing that king, our Saviour, and other figures richly ornamented with gold ‡, and all the letters are gilt from the beginning to the end of the book.

A thousand proofs appear in history, that the art of polishing and setting of precious stones, was also understood by the Anglo-Saxons at this time; for the multitude of ornaments that were worn by the kings and nobles of this period, adorned with jewels, must have made this art a necessary branch of the goldsmith's employment; besides which, the vestments of the clergy, and the variety of utensils belonging to the church, were frequently enriched with a profusion of precious stones. The ornament described above, belonging to Ælfred, has a crystal set before it so strongly, that it remains firm to this day.

A curious lantern is in being, which is universally looked upon to be of Saxon workmanship, and from the similarity between the ornaments that appear upon it, and those that are found in the manuscripts of the tenth century, we may fairly conclude it to be of that date; and this renders it very curious, both as a specimen of the art of metalry, as also that of setting precious stones. The lantern is of brass, and not inelegantly made, about ten inches high, and five in diameter at bottom, with a small door on one side of it. The light was emitted from it through five rows of holes, in each of which was set a piece of fine crystal; and, on the top is a large piece of the same, through which a handle, now broken off above, was fixed to the cone. From the nature and construction of this lantern (which as an exact representation of it accompanies this chapter, need not be more fully described §) it is evident that it could not furnish much light, and this has led many to think that it was used for some religious purpose, and might be set upon the altar in such a manner as to throw light upon particular places where the images of saints, or precious relics might be hung up, in order to inspire the congregation with the greater awe and reverence by an appearance so unusual.

Before we entirely quit the present subject, it will be but just to acknowledge, that we owe the invention of the lantern to Ælfred the Great (whose actions shine so gloriously, in every point of view, that we cannot sufficiently admire them); and the origin of this invention was as follows: That prince, who was particularly careful

\* Stigand, bishop of Winchester, made, says the author of the annals of Winton, "Magnam crucem duabus imaginibus, viz. Sanct. Mariæ & Johannis; & illas cum trabe vestitus auro & argento."--- Angl. Sacra, p. 293.

† In the Cotton Library marked Vespasian A. VIII.

‡ An exact copy of this curious picture may be seen in a work intitled, *The Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of England*, plate I. with a full description of it.

§ Plate VII. of this volume.

Ælfred the inventor of the lantern.

that

that no part of his life should be spent in vain, for the more regular dispatch of business, he divided the four and twenty hours of the day into three several portions, in which he conducted the affairs of state, attended to his studies, and refreshed himself with food and sleep. That he might know when each portion of time was at an end (for clocks were not at this time discovered, and dials could only be useful when the sun shone) he caused seventy-two pennyweights of wax to be made into six tapers, of equal weight and size, for his daily use; every taper was twelve inches long, and at every inch a mark was made; three inches of the taper burned one hour, and the whole of it four, and all the six, being lighted one after the other, completed the twenty-four hours; and, by this contrivance, he knew what time it was, either by day or by night. But finding that oftentimes the wind, coming through the doors and windows of his chapel, (where the lights were kept burning) or the cloth of his tent, when he was in the field, wasted the tapers, and prevented their burning to any great certainty, to remedy this great inconvenience he caused lanterns to be made, framed with wood, which enclosed thin squares of oxens horns, and within these the taper was shut up, where it burned more regularly, and the rays of light were emitted through the horn, which was so contrived as to be almost as transparent as glass\*.

\*Coinage, only a  
general account  
intend'd.

In the former volume, the account of the Anglo-Saxon coins was postponed, in order that it might be the more regularly pursued in the present chapter. It is true, that this article would require much more room than the limits of the present work can afford; if every particular were to be minutely entered upon; but as it is here proposed not to give a history of coinage, but only to explain so much as may be necessary to give the reader a general idea of the Anglo-Saxon coins, we shall chiefly attend to such particulars as are in general agreed upon among the most celebrated authors and judges, and pass over disputed points.

Sorts of money  
among the An-  
gio-Saxons.

The Saxons had two sorts of money, one of which was singular enough, and is named, in their records, living money. This consisted of slaves, and cattle of all sorts, which, according to the value fixed upon them by law, were equally current with gold or silver in the payment of debts†. The other money was of gold and silver, and the latter consisted chiefly of coined pieces, called by the Saxons penigas, or, in the present language, pennies.

Not known  
what Saxon king  
first coined mo-  
ney.

It is not possible to discover what Saxon king first coined pieces of money; however, the honour is generally attributed to Ethelbert, the first Christian king of Kent, who reigned from A. D. 560 to A. D. 616, as no coins more ancient than his have hitherto been discovered. Af-

\* Aferius Vita Ælfredi.

† Hist. Elien. apud Gale. lib. 1. cap. 10.

ter this time, the coining of silver pennies became very common, not only in Kent, but also in the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy\*.

The various names of the Anglo-Saxon money mentioned in their laws, and other ancient monuments, are as follows: The pound; the mark; the mancus; the ora; the shilling; the thrimsa; the sceata; the penny; the halfling; the feorþthling; and the flica; but only two of these, namely, the penny and the flica, are positively known to be real coins; the rest are esteemed as merely nominal money.

It is universally agreed, that the pound was by no means a real coin; but an appellation given to as many coins as weighed a pound in the scales. The Saxon pound is thought to have been the very same with the old tower pound, which was as follows: 450 grains in an ounce, and 12 ounces in a pound. Some have imagined, that the Saxons had two money pounds, one consisting of 12, and the other 16 ounces; because it is very evident from several of the laws during this period, that it sometimes contained only 48 Saxon shillings; and, at other times, no less than 60†. But others have accounted for this alteration in the number of shillings that composed the pound, another way, by supposing the value of the shilling itself to have been altered, so as at one time to consist of four Saxon pennies, and, at another, of five, which, if granted, makes the pound always equal. Besides the money pound, the Saxons had another weight of the same denomination, which was called the mercantile, or market pound; and the weight was so regulated as to contain 15 ounces, and was obliged to be properly stamped‡.

The mark, according to the universal agreement of the learned, was no real coin. Its value is thought to have been anciently as it now is, two-thirds of a pound. The Saxons had also two marks, as well as two pounds; one of them was called the money-mark, by which pure gold and silver were weighed; in the days of king Cnut it contained eight ounces: and the other was named the mercantile mark, by which all goods and merchandize were to be weighed: it contained 12 ounces§.

The mancus has occasioned some dispute amongst the learned, whether it was really a coin, or only a part of the Anglo-Saxon nominal money; the latter, however, is, at this day, generally believed to be

\* See plate XVII. vol. I. of this work, same law, is equal to 120 pounds; but by and the explanation in the Appendix, p. 362. a law of Cnut against the violation of the peace in churches, 240 shillings is equal to 5 pounds, which restored the shilling to its former value. Vide Leg. Æthelstani & Cnuti.

† It is plain that there were 60 shillings in the pound in the days of Æthelstan, as appears from one of his laws, wherein the Weregild of a thane is declared to be 1200 shillings, and the Weregild of a king to be six times as much as that of the thane, namely, 7200 shillings, which, adds the

‡ Leg. Æthelredi apud Brompton.

§ Dr. Henry's Hist. of Brit. vol. 2. p. 497.

the truth, because no such coins have hitherto been discovered. The mancús contained 30 Saxon pennies, and was therefore the eighth part of the Saxon money pound\*.

The ora. The ora is universally considered as a money merely nominal; its value is supposed to have been the weight of twenty Saxon pennies, equal to one-twelfth of the Saxon pound†.

The shilling. Many are the disputes concerning the Anglo-Saxon shilling, which not a few authors have affirmed to have been a real coin; and true it is, that no money is so frequently mentioned in the ancient Saxon monuments as the shilling, by which the greater part of the mulcts or fines were regulated and to be paid: but it is now acknowledged as merely nominal, no such piece having been discovered amongst the vast variety that have been found from time to time. The value of the shilling was not always the same; sometimes it was the fortieth, and sometimes only the sixtieth part of the pound; but the exact times in which these changes took place cannot easily be discovered.

The thrimfa. The thrimfa was no coin, but a nominal money, containing three Saxon pennies; but the thrimfa is supposed to have never been universally used in accounts and reckonings‡.

The penny. The penny was certainly a real coin, and perhaps the only silver one of these times, at least no other have yet been discovered. The weight of the penny is not always the same, but varies considerably; and this difference is not only found in those struck during the Heptarchy, and in separate kingdoms, but also in most, if not all, of those that were struck after the union of the Heptarchy, and that too in the coins of the same monarch. As 240 pennies were coined out of a pound weight of silver, every one of these pennies ought to have weighed 22 grains and a half; but they are rarely, if ever, found to be so heavy as that; the weight of those which are yet extant, is found by persons most conversant in this study, to be from 19 to 22 grains upon an average.

The Sceata. The Sceata is thought to have been the same as the penny.

The halfling. The halfling, so called from its being the half of a penny, is, by several authors, reported to have been a real silver coin, and, if it was weight, it should have been 11 grains, or thereabout.

The feorthing. The feorthing; as the halfling has its name from being the half of a penny, so the feorthing also receives its name from its being the quarter or fourth part of the same coin, and if this also was a real silver coin, as many suppose it was, its weight should have been five grains and an half. There are two reasons advanced by the advocates for the halfling and feorthing's having been real coins; the first

\* Aelfric, the grammarian, mentions this money, and declares this to be the value of it.

† Ora valbat 16. denarios, vel due 32 denarios. Spelman Gloss. in voc.

‡ Clark on coins.

is, that they are frequently mentioned in the ancient records of the Anglo-Saxons, in such a manner as gives reason to conclude that they were; and the second is, that it would have been very inconvenient, if not almost impossible for the poorer class of people especially, to have purchased all the various necessaries of life without continual trouble and confusion, if there had been no smaller coin than a penny. These two reasons seem very just, and if the prices of any article were fixed at a halfling or feorthling, as doubtless many were, how was the purchaser to pay the vender if there was no coin less than a penny? However, it is certain that no such coins as either the halfling or feorthling have yet been discovered; which, on the other hand, is a strong reason to think, that they were not real coins.

The stica was undoubtedly a real coin of brass, and many of them <sup>The stica.</sup> are in existence at this day; but as there are no others found but what were coined apparently in the kingdom of Northumberland, it may very reasonably be concluded, that they were not coined elsewhere. Their value is half a farthing.

After the foregoing short account of the Anglo-Saxon money, <sup>Table of coin.</sup> whether real or nominal, the following table of their weights, and sterling value may not be useless.

	Weight Troy Grains.	Sterling Value.		
		l.	s.	d.
Pound - - - - -	5400	2	16	3
Mark - - - - -	3600	1	17	9
Mancus of gold - -	56	0	7	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mancus of silver -	675	0	7	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ora - - - - -	450	0	4	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Greater shilling -	112 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	1	2
Lesser shilling -	90	0	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Thrimfa - - - -	67 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Penny and Sceata -	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Halfling - - - -	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	0	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$
Feorthling - - -	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
Stica, brass coin -		0	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$

Besides the money that was struck in England, some foreign coins <sup>Foreign coin current in England.</sup> were current amongst the Anglo-Saxons, as the old Byzantine solidus, called the byzant\*, the most ancient Frank solidus; and the lesser Frank solidus. The byzant weighed 73 troy grains of gold, and was worth about forty Saxon pennies, or nine shillings of our present money. The ancient Frank solidus was of the same weight and value as the Saxon mancus; the lesser solidus was far inferior, being worth no

\* The famous St. Dunstan bought an Eadgar, which he paid for in byzants.  
estate at Hindon in Middlesex of king Cambden's Remains, p. 182.

more than twelve Saxon pennies, or two shillings and ten-pence sterling\*.

Fineness of Saxon coins.

The Saxon silver pennies (of which vast numbers are yet preserved in the cabinets of the curious) are found in general to consist of nine parts of pure silver to one of copper, and great penalties were exacted by law upon those who debased the coin; one of the laws of Æthelstan commanded, that if any minter coined money below the standard, he should have his right hand cut off; and nailed upon his mint-door; and another law of Æthelred the second, commanded the offender to be put to death †: but however just the mint-masters might have been in keeping the silver as pure as it was commanded, they did not always attend with the same exactness with regard to the weight, which is found frequently to differ essentially, as hath been before observed.

Allowance made for the wear of coins.

Some authors tell us that the Saxons, having observed that the weight of the coins was considerably lessened by long and constant use, ordained, that when a debt amounting to one pound was paid in pennies that had been sometime in use, 250 of those pennies were given instead of 240, the real number coined out of the pound weight of silver, adding one to every four and twenty, to make up the deficiency of weight, occasioned by the wear of coin ‡.

The art of coining imperfect.

The art of coining amongst the Anglo-Saxons was certainly very imperfect at this period, as all their money now in being may sufficiently evince; there is little doubt to be made of the coins being struck with a hammer, because the invention of a press or vice for that purpose is of much later date. Concerning the workmanship of these coins, or their size, much need not here be said, as these particulars will be much better explained by an exact representation of some of them §.

Name of the town put on the coins.

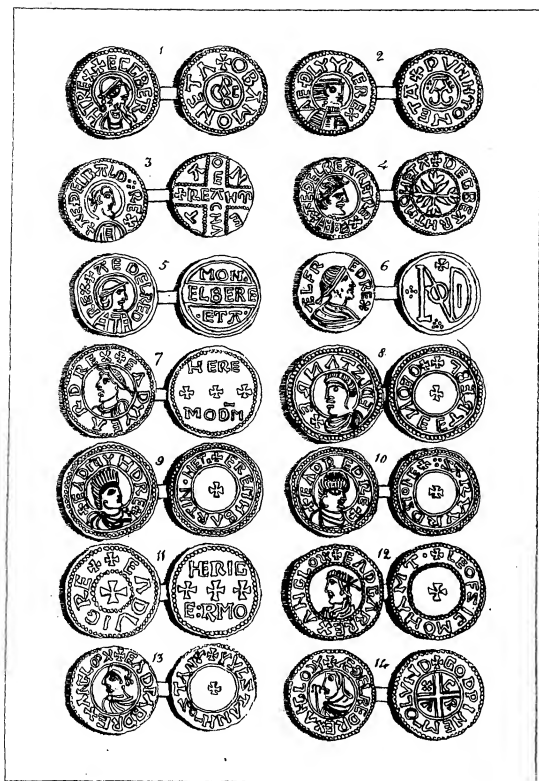
On the coins of the heptarchy, as well as those of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, until the reign of king Æthelstan, we seldom find any other name than that of the mint-master, which is stamped upon the reverse; but that prince in the third year of his reign, A. D. 928, caused an edict to be made, commanding for the future, that the name of the town where the piece was coined, as well as the mint-masters name, should be put upon the reverse; and this law was universally observed, not only during the Saxon monarchy, but in after times, as late down after the conquest, as the reign of Edward the first.

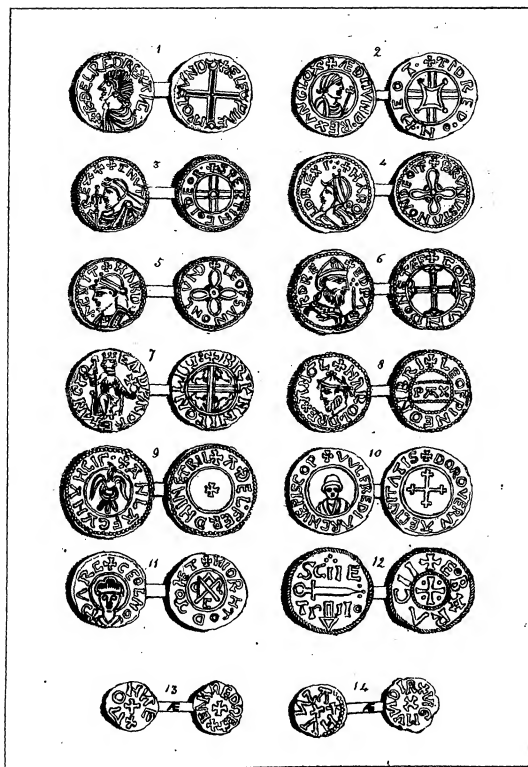
\* Dr. Henry, vol. II.

† Vide Leges Æthelstani et Ethelredi apud Wilkins.

‡ Vide Dr. Henry, *ut sup.*

§ See plates VIII. and IX. of this volume, with the explanation of the coins in the Appendix.







## C H A P. VII.

*Habits of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes.*

THE art of weaving cloths, and of dying, with other dependent operations, were known to the Anglo-Saxons long before the union of the Heptarchy, so that it will be needless to enter into any further discourse concerning them, and more particularly, because it will be impossible to discover to what degree of perfection they were carried in England at this period; silks, linen, and the most esteemed cloths, however, appear to have been imported from abroad, and constituted a considerable part of the articles wherewith other nations supplied the English, not only at this time, but even long after the Norman conquest.

The art of weaving, &c., known before this period.

One thing we must not omit, for which the Anglo-Saxon ladies were very famous, and that was the art of needlework and embroidery with threads of gold and silver, and various colours, wherewith they not only delineated flowers, birds or other ornaments of the like kind, but also historical representations of particular events, and the actions of great men. Wiglaf, king of Mercia, had a golden veil, whereon was worked in embroidery, the destruction of Troy, which he gave to the abbey of Croyland\*. We may also mention the famous tapestry of Bayeux, on which is represented a whole series of events, beginning with the embassy of Harold the second, to the court of William duke of Normandy, and ending with his death at the battle of Hastings about two years after†; this, we are positively told, was the work of Matilda, wife to duke William, and the ladies of the court; many of whom were English, and greatly assisted in the completion of this curious performance.

Anglo-Saxon ladies famous for embroidery.

The art of embroidery was in the highest esteem at court, and a material part of the education of a young princess, or lady of the first nobility, and to excel in it was accounted a great honour. The four daughters of Edward the elder, in particular, are highly praised for their skill in spinning, weaving, and needle-work‡.

Art of embroidery learned by ladies of highest rank

We shall now proceed to give as minute a description of the dress of the Anglo-Saxons, as is consistent with the present design.

The habits of the Anglo-Saxons described.

\* "Velum meum *(says Wiglaf in his charter to the abbey of Croyland)* aureum quo insuitur excidium Troiæ." Ingulf. a Saville edit. p. 487. 6.

† Montfaucon's *Monarchie Francoise*.

‡ Malmf. lib. 2. cap. v.

General habit  
of the men.

The general exterior habit of the men among the Anglo-Saxons, from the king to the husbandman, appears to have been nearly of the same form, and to differ only in the fineness of the cloth, and the ornaments with which those of the kings and nobles frequently abound. This common habit was a tunic, with sleeves reaching to the wrist, bound about the waist, from whence it was continued down to the top of the knee; over this they usually wore a short cloak, which was most frequently buckled upon the left shoulder, though sometimes indeed, instead thereof, it was fastened upon the middle of the breast; but this variation seems to be always the mark of a person of distinction\*.

Particular habit  
of the nobility.

The habits particular to the nobility, and which seem never to be worn by persons of the lower class, differed from those above described, and bore a much nearer resemblance to the royal robes of the king†; this habit consisted of a tunic with sleeves, that reached down to the ankles, or at least to the middle of the leg, and over that they wore a robe proportionable to it in length‡; this habit however the nobility, to whom alone it seems to have belonged, did not often wear, but only when they were exercising their civil authority, or appeared on solemn occasions at the king's court.

General habit  
of the women.

The general exterior habit of the women consisted of a tunic, which reached down to their ankles, and had loose open sleeves, that commonly ended at the wrists, though some few instances are found of these sleeves being long enough to cover the hands and reach some distance below them§; the tunic was girded about the waist with a girdle of cloth. They also constantly wore a veil which covered all the head and shoulders, and in general extended no further than the middle of the breast||, though in some instances the same veil reaches down all round the body, like a large cloak, without being open before¶.

General habit  
of the clergy.

The habit of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, in the early ages of christianity, was very plain and simple, and such indeed we find it in the most ancient delineations; the dress of the monk consisted of a tunic like that of the nobles, long, loose, and reaching to the ankles, over which they wore a large loose gown, with large sleeves reaching a little below the elbow\*\*, and not much different from this was the habit of the bishop, the chief distinction was the loose gown or surplice

\* See fig. 4, 5, 6. plate X. and fig. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. plate XI. and fig. 6, 7. plate XII. of this volume, &c.

† See plate XIX. of the first volume of this work, p. 343, and plate I. of the present volume.

‡ See fig. I. plate XI. and fig. 10. plate XV. of this volume.

§ See fig. 4. plate XII.

|| See fig. 4, 5. plate XII.

¶ See fig. 1, 2, 3. plate XII. of this vol.

\*\* Fig. 3. plate X.

being





being rather longer than that of the monk, and the bottom of this tunic, as well as the edges of the sleeves of the surplice, are ornamented with embroidery, while all the habit of the monk is perfectly plain and unadorned with edgings\*. The archbishop has also a tunic like the two former clergymen, and a loose surplice with large sleeves, part of which falls down before him to his middle, and two other parts of it fall from each shoulder behind him as low as that in front; there also appears before him on the outside of the tunic, two long pendant fillets, reaching nearly to the bottom of it, and ornamented at the ends with thin pieces of gold†. But in the succeeding times of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, the clergy laid aside the simplicity of habit, and adopted other modes far more rich and pompous‡.

The Anglo-Saxons, and the Danes, considered fine long flowing hair as one of the greatest ornaments a person could possess, which made them very careful to preserve its beauty, and deck it out to the greatest advantage; so happy were the Danes (who resided in England, in the reign of Eadgar the peaceable) in the skilful management of their hair, that they thereby captivated the hearts of the English ladies§. To have the hair shorn off, was also a mark of the greatest disgrace amongst the fair sex, and was therefore one part of the punishment inflicted upon such as committed adultery||. Long hair being esteemed beautiful, it was considered as a mark of self-denial amongst the clergy to be deprived of such an ornament, for they were obliged to shave the crowns of their heads by way of distinction, and were by several canons forbid to conceal the tonsure¶. The wearing of long hair was carried to such an extravagant length during the reign of Edward the Confessor, that it gave great offence to the clergy, and some of them preached vehemently against so unmanly a custom\*\*. Though the Anglo-Saxon ladies admired long hair, and were very particular in putting it into form, yet it is certain that when they were dressed, none (or at most a very small part) of it could be discovered, their heads being constantly covered with a kind of hood or veil††. The men

Fine hair as  
an ornament.

\* See fig. 2. plate XI.

† Fig. 1. plate X.

‡ See the figure of St. Dunstan, plate III. of this volume.

§ J. Walingford apud Gale.

|| Tacit. de morib. German.

¶ Johnfon's Canons, A. D. 960. cap. 47.

\*\* An ancient author gives us the following curious anecdote "The wearing of long hair during the reign of Edward the Confessor was so common, that Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, who flourished at that time, not only boldly inveighed against this

custom and severely reproached the people for their effeminacy, but when any one bowed down their heads to receive his blessing, before he gave it, he cut off a lock of hair with a little sharp knife that he carried about him for that purpose, and commanded, by way of penance, that they should cut the rest of their hair in the same manner, denouncing dreadful judgments against such as refused to comply with this imposition." Vita Wulfstani Anglia Sacra, T. 2. p. 254.

†† See plate XII.

frequently

frequently appear in the manuscript delineations without any covering for their heads; but when they are covered, their common caps bear a great resemblance to the ancient Phrygian bonnet, setting close round the forehead, from whence they rise with a curve \*, but when we find the nobility attending upon the king, the curve at the top of the cap is omitted, and the cap is precisely conical †; at other times they wore no caps, but diadems or circles of gold, or metal gilt ‡, and in some of the ancient monuments of this period, we find mention of half circles of gold, or gilt, which probably were used as hair tires by the women §.

Shaving of  
beards by the  
clergy.

Another particular mark of distinction between the clergy and the laity was, that the former constantly shaved their beards, whilst the latter were permitted to let them grow as they pleased; but the custom of wearing long beards gradually decreased, so that in the reign of Edward the Confessor, the Anglo-Saxons shaved off all their beards, except what grew upon the upper lip, which was permitted to extend to a considerable length ||.

Shirts of linen.

The Anglo-Saxon nobility, and such as could purchase them, were very fond of wearing linen shirts, which were made of softer and finer materials according to the purchaser's price; as this part of the dress was worn next to the skin, we do not meet with the shape of it in the ancient delineations. In almost all the drawings of female figures, there is the appearance of an internal garment under the tunic, with close sleeves reaching down to the wrists, which very likely was a linen shift ¶. The wearing of linen shirts was certainly looked upon as a species of luxury, because woollen shirts are by the canons enjoined by way of penance for great offences \*\*.

Tunics.

The form of the tunics we have already seen, and those of the soldiers are said to have been made of linen; if we may judge from the appearance of the womens tunics which are seen in the ancient delineations, we shall also have reason to believe that they also were linen, though dyed of various colours according to the fancy of the wearer. The tunics of the kings and nobility very probably were of silk, or at least bordered and ornamented with silk and rich embroidery ††.

Robes or mantles.

The cloaks or robes of the Anglo-Saxons, like the tunic, were made of a variety of materials according to the rank and riches of the wearer; they were oftentimes ornamented round the edges with borders of embroidery of gold, or silks of various colours, and those worn by the

\* See figure 1. 3. plate XI. of this volume.

† See fig. 8. plate XV.

‡ See fig. 1, 2, 3. plate XV.

§ *Dealrne bænd gylbenne.*  
*Hicceſſi Diſſert. Epist. p. 51.*

|| Malmſb. lib. 3.

¶ See plate XII. of this vol.

\*\* Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 963.

cap. 64.

†† See fig. 2. plate XIX. vol. I. and fig.

kings at the time of their coronation were purple\*; we find them of several colours in the ancient delineations; and from their appearance they seem to be made in general of fine cloth. The cloaks or mantles of the queens, or ladies of distinction, most likely were either silk or fine linen.

Wiglaf, king of Mercia, in a charter to the abbey of Croyland, makes mention of a golden veil, which was richly ornamented with embroidery, representing the history of the destruction of Troy†, but what part of the royal habit this was, cannot be easily explained. The veil part of the royal habit.

Figures in the most ancient delineations, appear with naked legs, Stockings. but towards the latter end of the Saxon monarchy we find stockings very common, especially amongst persons of condition, and might be made of woollen or linen; they appear to be made to fit the leg, and are wrapped about with a bandage, that makes many turns round the leg from the calf to the middle‡.

The shoes seem to have undergone little or no alteration during the whole of this period, their form in most modern Saxon manuscripts differs but little from those in the most ancient; in the former they sometimes appear to be enriched with ornaments and jewels§, and the use of them seems to have become more general, because none but the slaves, and the very lowest class of people, are painted without them.

Gloves were worn at the latter end of the period we are now speaking of by the Anglo-Saxon kings and noblemen, and were a part of the duty that was paid to king Æthelred the Second by the foreign merchants settled in London for the protection he afforded them||.

The greater part of the dress of the women of distinction and of the clergy seems to have been of fine linen, which was frequently ornamented with borders enriched with embroidery, if not with precious stones¶. Linen by whom most worn.

Persons of wealth of both sexes were, at this period, extremely fond of ornaments of gold; such as massy bracelets for the arms\*\* and neck††; and rings for the fingers; chains of gold, and circlets set with jewels; which they wore upon their heads: golden bracelets were

\* Ingulph. Hist. Croyland.

† Ibid.

‡ See fig. 6. plate XI.

§ See plate I. of this vol.

|| See page 225 of this vol.

¶ See fig. 4. plate X. 2. 4. 5. plate XI.

\*\* See one of these bracelets for the arms, as given from an ancient Saxon manuscript, plate XVI. fig. 11.

†† We find bracelets for the neck mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon wills, where

they are called by the name of *rpeon-beah*, and some of them weighed 80 mancusses of gold, and some more. Some of the arm bracelets of the men would weigh 180 mancusses of gold, equal to seventeen ounces and three quarters of gold, Troy weight. Hicckell Dissert. Epist. p. 51.

worn by officers of distinction as civil and military badges of their office, and were frequently given by kings and princes to their followers as the reward of their valour or conduct; for which reason those royal personages are stiled in the poems of that age bracelet-givers\*.

Girdles,  
swords, &c.

Belts or girdles were admired ornaments among the Anglo-Saxon persons of distinction, which were often curiously embroidered, and richly set with precious stones; from this belt the men usually suspended their swords, the hilts of which as well as the scabbards, were often adorned with gold, silver, or precious stones †.

Furs.

Furs also came into use towards the latter end of the present period, and were worn by the nobility: those of sables, beavers, and of foxes, were esteemed the most valuable; but such as could not afford to purchase them were forced to be content with others of less price, as the furs of cats and of lambs. The clergy, who at this time were as fond of pomp and finery as the laity, wore the richest furs, for which they were rebuked by Wulfstan bishop of Worcester, who contented himself with lamb's fur, which was esteemed the most common of all ‡.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Learned Men, and the State of Learning amongst the Anglo-Saxons, from the Beginning to the End of the Saxon Monarchy, with a short Account of the Anglo-Saxon Language.*

Decline of  
learning.

**L**EARNING was upon the decline towards the latter end of the eighth century, and, at the commencement of the ninth, was almost totally extinguished §. Indeed, there were not above one or two men of the least note in literature from the death of Alcuinus, A.D. 804, to the accession of Ælfred the Great to the Saxon throne, A.D. 871, at which time the most learned man was Johannes Scotus Erigena, so named from his country Scotland, and the town of his birth, supposed to be the town of Air in that kingdom. This extra-

\* *Æþelstan cýning, eoþla  
þuhten, beoþna beah týfa*;  
*Æþelstan, the King, the Lord of Earls, the  
Child of the Bracelet-giver.* Chron. Sax.  
sub. an.

† Hicceſii Diſſert. Epist. p. 51.

‡ Vita Wulfſtani Angl. Sax. t. 2. p. 259.

§ "At my acceſſion to the throne" ſays  
king Ælfred himſelf, in a letter to Wulfſig,

bishop of Worcester) "all knowledge of  
" learning was forgotten in the kingdom of  
" England, inſomuch that few to the fourth  
" of the Humber underſtood the common  
" prayers of the church, or were capable  
" of tranſlating a ſingle Latin ſentence into  
" the Saxon tongue; but on the ſouth of  
" the Thames" (adds he) "I cannot re-  
" collect one that could do this." Spel.  
Vita Ælfredi, Appendix, p. 196.

ordinary



ordinary man finding none at home capable of instructing him, travelled as far as Greece in order to improve himself in learning, and by his assiduity acquired a greater knowledge in that language, and in philosophical inquiries, than any other of his cotemporaries\*. His learning, and other accomplishments, gained him the favour of Charles the Bald, king of France. He wrote several books, some of which gave offence to the clergy; but his most capital work was a book concerning the Nature of Things, or the Division of Nature †. Our English historians affirm, that after the death of his patron Charles the Bald, he came over into England at the invitation of king Ælfred, and taught in the schools of Oxford, and that afterwards retiring thence to the abbey of Malmesbury, he was murdered by the scholars with their penknives ‡. But it has been justly observed by the modern authors, that the ancient historians have confounded this man with another John Scot a Saxon, who was a preceptor at Oxford, and slain by the monks of Ethelinge of which he was abbot; Erigena probably ended his days in France §.

In the reign of Ælfred the Great, learning was again restored; but in such profound ignorance were the times enveloped in the early part of his life, that although he was the son of a king, yet, at twelve years of age, he had not been taught to distinguish one letter from another, so little was learning esteemed necessary to compleat the education of a prince. ¶, and, indeed, at the last, the knowledge that Ælfred acquired in literature seems rather to have been owing to an accident than design. One day, the queen his mother, had in her hand a book of Saxon poems, beautifully written and illuminated, which attracted the notice of Ælfred and his royal brothers, which the queen perceiving, said to them, he who will first learn to read this book shall have it, for his pains, which promise prevailed so much with Ælfred, that he instantly applied himself to the study of letters, and made such a hasty progress that, in a little time, he not only read, but repeated the poem to his mother, and had the book bestowed upon him according as had been promised. From this time he applied himself with great assiduity to reading, and his thirst after knowledge, instead of abating increased daily; but, want of proper masters to instruct him, and the troubles of the state which required his assistance, were great obstacles to his improvement. However, that he might neglect no opportunity that offered, he constantly carried a book in his bosom, to study when he found leisure. When he had restored peace to his kingdom by the reduction of the Danes, he redoubled his diligence in the pursuit of literature, and by constant application, became one of the greatest scholars of the age wherein he flourished. It

\* Ball de Scriptor.

‡ Malmsh. lib. 2. c. 4.

† This book was published by Dr. J. Gale.

§ *Aster. Vit. Ælfredi.*

¶ *Ibid.*

is said that he spoke the Latin language as fluently as his own, and was perfectly well acquainted with the Greek, though he did not speak it\*. He was, in short, an eloquent orator, a great philosopher, an historian, a skilful musician and architect, and an excellent poet†.

Learned foreigners invited.

Ælfred, for the greater encouragement of literature, among his subjects, invited learned men from foreign countries to his court, where he gave them every possible encouragement, and favoured them with the highest marks of his esteem. Some he kept about his own person as companions of his studies, and to assist him in the education of his children; others he stationed in such places as they might prove useful to the public, and advance the general cause of literature‡.

Afferius a man of learning.

One of the chief of those learned men whom king Ælfred invited to his court was Afferius, a monk of Saint David's in Wales, to whom we owe the full account of the life and actions of that great prince. Afferius was a great favourite with Ælfred, who was charmed with his conversation, and entreated him to stay with him at court, and return no more to his monastery; but though Afferius could not well consent to this request, he obtained permission of the fraternity to reside one half the year at the king's court, on condition of his tarrying the other half at the monastery. The greater part of the time he spent with the king was taken up in studying with him, who, in return, made him many noble presents§.

Grimbald,

Grimbald, a monk of Rheims, was another learned man, whom Ælfred invited to his court to assist him in the revival of learning among his subjects, who, from his knowledge in theology and ecclesiastical matters, and skill in church music, was very serviceable to the king.

John Scot, and other learned men,

John Scot, a native of Old Saxony, was another that received an invitation from the king, who came over into England, and taught in the public schools in Oxford. This man has been confounded by some of the ancient historians with Johannes Scotus Erigena; but it is evident that he was a different person||. Other learned men, who assisted king Ælfred in his laudable design, were Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury; Wenefrid, bishop of Worcester; Dunwulf, bishop of Winchester; Wulfig and Æthelstan, both bishops of London, and Werebert, bishop of Chester¶.

Ælfred translates books.

Ælfred not only caused these assistants to use their utmost endeavours to promote the advancement of literature, but also joined his own labours, composing many original works, and translating others out of the Latin into the Saxon tongue, that they might be under-

\* Affer. Vit. Ælfredi.

† W. Malmib. l. 2. c. 4. Ingulph, &c.

‡ Affer. Vit. Ælfredi.

§ Ibid.

|| Ingulph. Hist. Croyland.

¶ Afferius Vit. Ælfredi.

stood by the people\*; for whose use, and the encouragements of learning they were solely designed.

At the time Ælfred came to the throne, all public schools <sup>University of Oxford instituted.</sup> and seminaries of learning were destroyed; therefore, when he repaired the ruined monasteries, and built new ones, he erected a school in each for the education of youth; but as the learning acquired at these schools was chiefly religious, and confined to such youth as were designed for the church, they contributed very little in spreading the light of literature amongst the laity, the consideration of which caused king Ælfred to form a noble design to make learning more universal, which he soon after executed. He determined, therefore, to institute public schools on a more extensive plan, wherein youth might be instructed in all the known sciences by the best masters that could be procured, and he fixed upon Oxford for the spot; and to enable his designs to be carried forward with the greater success, he provided at that place all suitable accommodations, as well for the tutors, as the scholars †.

He also did all that lay in his power to encourage the pursuit of <sup>Revival of Literature.</sup> learning, the way to which he had rendered so easy and pleasant, not only by his own zealous example, but by speaking of literature at all times with the greatest commendation, and by making it the road to preferment both in church and state ‡. He was so successful in his undertaking, that the thirst for learning began to grow universal; the old nobility bewailed their want of knowledge, and corrected that error in the education of their children; and some of them, even in their advanced age, applied themselves to letters with great assiduity. Before his decease all the sees in his dominions were filled with learned prelates, and such as well understood the nature of their offices, and the duty they ought to perform; by which means the precepts of religion were better explained to the people than they had been done heretofore.

After the death of Ælfred, learning gradually declined again; for <sup>Decline of learning again.</sup> Edward the Elder, his son, who succeeded him, not having a genius or taste for study equal to his father, was not so zealous a patron of learned men. The subsequent invasion of the Danes, who were professed enemies to all civility and science, may be thought sufficient reasons for this decline, and the occasion that when those men of learning who flourished under the protection of king Ælfred, died, they were not succeeded by others of equal abilities; so that during the greater part

\* The ignorance of the clergy was the occasion of his undertaking this task, as he himself informs us in his preface to his Saxon translation of the Pastoral of St. Gregory. Vid. Spelman. Vit. Ælfredi, where may be found a complete list of the works of this king, amongst which his translation of Bede's Ecclesiastical History is one of the chief.

† Spelman Vit. Ælfredi Johan. Rossii, &c.

‡ Malmsh. l. 2. cap. 4.

of the tenth century, and in the beginning of the eleventh, the light of literature was almost totally extinguished, not only in England, but indeed all over Europe\*.

University of  
Cambridge in-  
stituted.

BUT although Edward the Elder had not that ardent zeal in the cause of literature which his father manifested, yet he, in many things, imitated his example, and went so far (if we may believe some of the later writers) as to found or restore the university of Cambridge after the same manner as his father had done at Oxford†. If this report is true, that university was destroyed by the Danes in the beginning of the eleventh century, and not rebuilt till after the Norman conquest.

The children of  
King Edward  
famous for  
learning.

Edward was also very careful to give his children a liberal education, and they so far profited thereby, that they far excelled all the princes and princesses that were cotemporary with them in literary accomplishments. Ethelward, his third son, in particular, is noticed by historians to have been a young man of very promising genius, but he died young‡. Also Æthelstan, his eldest son, who succeeded him in his throne, is said to have been a prince of great learning for the age in which he flourished§; and his love for literature seems evident from one of his laws, by which it was decreed, that any man who acquired such a proficiency in learning as to obtain priest's orders, should be honoured with the dignity and privileges of a thane||. Yet, notwithstanding all this, it is certain, that no men of any great note in the literary line flourished, either during the reigns of Edward the Elder, of Æthelstan, or, indeed, of any of the five succeeding kings; for notwithstanding all the extravagant encomiums that have been bestowed by the monks upon their favourite Dunstan, and the praises they heap upon him on account of his learning, their assertions are rather suspicious, because in many instances, they have not scrupled to depart from the truth.

Total decline  
of literature.

After the decease of Eadgar, the power of the Danes continually increased, and England became a scene of ruin and desolation, and among other places that felt the effects of the rage of those merciless invaders, Oxford and Cambridge, the seats of literature, were buried in ruins¶. Ælfric, the grammarian, was the only learned man of note that flourished at this time in England. He was a man of great erudition, and a voluminous writer, but his history is clouded with many difficulties. He appears to have been born about the middle of the tenth century, and was educated under Ethelwald, bishop of Winchester, who took great pains to teach youth the rules of grammar, and the art of translating Latin into English. Whilst Ælfric was yet young, he manifested his superior abilities by the progress he made in

\* J. Ross.

† Malmb. lib. 2. c. 5.

‡ Ibid. c. 6.

§ Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 406.

|| Chron. Sax. sub an.

¶ Ib. sub. an. 1010.

his learning\*, and A. D. 987, he was sent by Elphegus (who succeeded Ethelwald in the see of Winchester) to the monastery of Cerne in Dorsetshire, then newly founded, where he composed a grammar of the Latin tongue ‡, and translated eighty homilies out of the Latin into Saxon for the use of the clergy †. These and other learned works procured him such great reputation, that he was advanced at last to the archiepiscopal chair.

King Cnut on his being established upon the Saxon throne, restored peace to the nation, after the long and distressing wars which it had sustained, and being himself a man fond of literature, it is supposed he re-edified the public schools at Oxford, and granted them the same privileges and revenues they had formerly enjoyed §; but these they were deprived of again, after his death, by his son and successor, Harold, and so remained until they were again restored by Edward the Confessor, under whose influence, Oxford once more became the chief seat of learning ¶.

The scarcity of books at this period, was a great hindrance to the progress of literature. Besides the difficulty of procuring proper masters of the sciences for the instruction of youth, the tedious and perplexing methods in which the sciences were taught, rendered them very discouraging to young minds, as for example, arithmetic, which is now learned by every common school-boy, was at that time considered as a science, almost exceeding the powers of the human mind to attain ¶. Nor is it at all surprizing, when we are informed, that the invention of Arabian figures was not known to them\*\*, and this want of figures most probably gave rise to the digital or manual arithmetic, by which various calculations were made ††, and this was esteemed a study of such importance, that it claimed the attention of one of the greatest Anglo-Saxon writers, who took great pains to explain the rules whereby it was to be learned §§.

\* Spelman's Concil. t. I. p. 572. Anglia Sacra, t. I. p. 130.

† Hence he obtained the surname of *Grammatician*.

‡ Anglia Sacra, these homilies are yet extant in the Bodleian and Cottonian libraries.

§ Wood's Antiq. Univ. Oxon.

¶ Thus much we may gather from the words of Ingulphus, who lived at this time. "I was born (says he) in England, of English parents, in the beautiful city of London, and educated in my tender years at Westminster, from whence I was after sent to Oxford to compleat my studies,

where I made a greater progress in the philosophy of Aristotle, than most of my companions, and became well acquainted with the rhetoric of Cicero. Ingulf. Hist. Croylond.

¶ Epist. Aldhelm. apud Anglia Sacra.

t. 1. p. 6, 7.

\*\* They had only the seven following MDCLXVI, or the 27 letters of the Greek alphabet. Bedæ opera, p. 8.

†† Bedæ opera, p. 127.

§§ The reader may easily conceive that the want of such numbers as are now in use must have rendered the study of arithmetic very tedious and perplexing.

Various sci-  
ences consid-  
ed.

As great difficulties undoubtedly attended the methods in which geometry, astronomy, and all the other sciences were taught, so but few were found possessed of resolution and assiduity equal to the task of acquiring the knowledge of them. How far they understood geography, at this period, may be seen by an old map delineated about the latter end of the ninth century \*, which, however devoid of truth it may be in some particulars, yet there is something in the general idea, or form, which plainly shows that the designer must have had better information of things than could have been expected, especially when we consider how few the travellers of this age were, and how confined their expeditions, and that learning of all kinds was chiefly, if not entirely, confined to monks, who scarcely ever quitted their cells.

State of medi-  
cine.

Concerning the state of medicine at this period, we have but little information; but, in the early part of it we may believe, that it consisted chiefly of nostrums which had been handed down from one age to another, which were often accompanied with whimsical rites and ceremonies, to which the success was often in a great measure attributed. When this was the case, the profession of medicine fell into the hands of the most ignorant people, and particularly old women were supposed to be the most expert in the applying remedies for the diseases, and accordingly were in high repute amongst the Anglo-Saxons; but after the establishment of Christianity, the clergy took upon them the profession of medicine, and the reputation of the old medicinal women gradually decayed. However, there is good reason to suppose, that the clergy were not less superstitious in their methods of application of medicine, than their venerable predecessors, observing carefully, certain times and seasons, which were esteemed either fortunate or unfortunate, especially the changes of the moon, and appearance of the planets, which were a matter of the greatest moment to be considered, when any medicines were to be administered; or the patient bled †. After Ælfred the Great had set the example of translating Latin and other books into the Saxon tongue, amongst others that were translated, were many medicinal ones, copies of some of which are at this day remaining, and one of them embellished with delineations of a variety of herbs not ill done, when we consider the low state of the arts at the time in which it was written, which as near as can be judged from the hand, appears to have been during the tenth century §. By such means as these, some knowledge of medicine was acquired before the conclusion of the Saxon government, at which time, per-

\* An engraving of this map is given plate XIII. of this volume, which the reader will find particularly explained in the appendix.

† Vide page 345 of the first volume of this work, note 1.

§ This MS. is in the Cotton library, marked Vitellius, c. 3.



MAP of the WORLD.  
 From an Ancient M.S. in the Cotton Library,  
 marked Tiberius B.V.

haps, besides these physical clergy, there might be persons whose only profession was surgery and physic.

Before we conclude this chapter, it is thought necessary to add some few observations concerning the antiquity and excellence of the Anglo-Saxon language. It was a branch of the Gothic or Teutonic tongue, which was one of the most ancient original languages of Europe. It is impossible to trace its origin; but at the period we are now treating of, it was copious and expressive, so that those who spoke it might deliver their ideas with great force and perspicuity\*.

Anglo-Saxon language considered.

Its excellency.

As a mark of its superior excellence, it has been affirmed, that almost all the original words of the Teutonic tongue consisted of but one syllable, and which was expressive of the nature of the thing so named, and that by a happy conjunction of these words a most expressive discourse was easily framed†; but after all, there is not sufficient proof that this was really the case, for in the most ancient remaining monuments of this language, it is certain that monosyllables are not so very frequent, and though it must be confessed that most of the present monosyllables in our modern language are of Saxon origin, yet it is equally certain that many of them formerly consisted of two syllables‡.

There is not the least reason to imagine that any very great change was made in the Anglo-Saxon language during this period: we have no remains of it as it was spoken before their conversion to Christianity, therefore it is impossible to trace it so high. All that can be done therefore in a work of a general nature, like the present, will be to lay before the readers some few specimens of the Anglo-Saxon language in the remoter and more modern parts of this period§.

With regard to the Danes, the language they spoke originated from the ancient Teutonic, as well as that of the Saxons, and on their settlement in Britain, did not long continue a distinct tongue, but was so blended into the Saxon language, that it soon became a particular dialect of the same. And this kind of Anglo-Dane-Saxonic was chiefly spoken in Northumberland, and the East-Angles where the Danes principally resided.

The great change made in it at this period.

The Danish language.

\* Camden's Remains, Verstegan, &c.

† Ibid.

‡ As for instance, the Saxon word Cyn-ning is now contracted to a word

of one syllable, king, so U-nen is our, pil-lo will, no-ma name, &c.

§ These specimens the reader will find in the Appendix to this volume.



## C H A P. IX.

*State of the Polite Arts amongst the Anglo-Saxons.*

Sculpture.

THE design of the present chapter is to offer some general remarks upon the state of sculpture, painting, poetry and music, during the Anglo-Saxon monarchy. With regard to sculpture, so few specimens of it are now remaining, that it will be impossible to form a fair judgment upon its defects or excellencies; the few bas-reliefs, perhaps the only species of sculpture of the Anglo-Saxons yet undestroyed, are, it is true, but rudely cut, and particularly deficient where the human figure is intended to be represented, and more especially where an attempt is made to show the figure naked. If we can depend indeed upon some monumental effigies, which are said to be the workmanship of the Saxons, we should pass a more favourable judgment upon the state of this art at the conclusion of the present period, than we had formed an idea of from the rudeness of some of the bas-reliefs or the manuscript delineations; however, it is generally thought, that the best sculptures of the Saxons, were stiff, awkward and clumsy.

Painting.

If the art of sculpture was carried to no great perfection by the Anglo-Saxons, that of design and painting seems still to have been more defective. The delineations we meet with in the more ancient Saxon manuscripts are scarcely more than outlines, and in general of but one colour, which at present appears to be a deepish brown; but in the more modern times of the Saxon monarchy, we meet with some few attempts at finishing the delineations, which perhaps may indeed be thought by artists of the present age to be no great improvement, since the spirit of the outline is often lost, or at least they are rendered rather more gaudy than elegant; but some specimens of these delineations in the manner they really appear, will doubtless be esteemed more satisfactory than the best description that can be given †.

\* Such as the monumental effigy of *Vitalis*, abbot of Westminster, (who died A. D. 1082.) in the cloisters of Westminster abbey, which although at present almost defaced bears the marks of having once been well executed.

† Specimens of the art of design amongst the Saxons may be seen plate XX. and XXI. vol. I. Also plates III. IV. XIII. XIV. and XV. of the present volume.

Plate XV. in particular contains a variety of specimens, and the MSS. from which they are taken are declared in the description of the plates in the Appendix at the end of this volume. For a greater variety of specimens the reader is referred to the first volume of the *hropda Angel-cynnann*, or Manners and Customs of the English.

The

INTEL LECT

CŪ VENIT DOECH BŪEVS ET AD  
N VNTI AVIT SAVL ET DIX Q VIA  
VENIT DŌ DE DOOQO AB IOA LECH



hpar

VII

pul

GL

dnafu pu

RIARIS

onyrel nasse  
INOPALITIAQ ū IPOENS

if unpuh pifneffe  
ESINI NIQVITATC

Taela dooze un pihc pifneffe pohv  
Totadie inultuam cognant

tunoge bin spalpa tcyffe ex  
lingua tua sicut nouacula

scaph du dybe se raem  
d'cuta fecisti dolum



The famous St. Dunstan is celebrated by his biographer, as very <sup>Dunstan a famous artist.</sup> skilful in the art of design, insomuch, that applications were made to him by religious ladies, to draw out patterns for them when they were desirous of making any curious piece of embroidery\*, and there is yet extant a drawing said to have been done by the hand of this extraordinary man †; but if we may judge of the taste of that age from this rude delineation, the conclusions we must draw from thence will be very unfavourable; at the same time it is but justice to declare, that this drawing of Dunstan's is far out-done by many others about the same date; yet, after all that can be said in favour of the manuscript delineations of the Anglo-Saxons, it must be acknowledged, that they are in general stiff and inelegant, without any regard being paid to the proportion or perspective; and the ornaments with which they are frequently crowded, (though better drawn than the figures,) are for the most part heavy and void of taste.

It was very common not only to ornament books with the portraits <sup>Portrait and history painting.</sup> of saints, of kings and other great men, but paintings of them were also placed in churches and monasteries ‡; several of the former are remaining to this day, but all of the latter have been long since destroyed. Nor did the painters confine themselves to portraits, historical delineations are frequent in the ancient manuscripts, besides which, they had larger pictures, representing passages in history, and the actions of great men; such a one was presented to the church of Ely by Edelfleda, the widow of the famous Brithnod, duke of Northumberland, in the tenth century, wherein she had caused to be painted the history of the great actions of her deceased lord, in order to preserve the memory of his valour and other virtues §.

It is a question if the art of painting upon glass was known or not <sup>Painting on glass thought not to be known.</sup> at this early period; but as there is by no means any sufficient evidence that it was, all further enquiries concerning it are likely to prove ineffectual; we shall, therefore, pass it over with a supposition that it was not.

As writing, at this time, may be esteemed a sort of painting, we <sup>Writing.</sup> will offer some few general remarks upon it in this place. We have already seen, that even during the Heptarchy, books were written and ornamented with uncommon pains; and it became fashionable to

\* *Anglia Sacra*, vol. II. p. 94.

† It is a figure of Christ, seated with Dunstan, himself in the habit of a monk kneeling at his feet; this delineation is copied from the original MS. in the Bodleian library, in the first volume of Hickes's *Theaurus*, and also in the first volume of the *Manners and Customs of the English* above-quoted, plate XVIII.

‡ *Malsbury* informs us, that there were portraits of *Styward*, first abbot of *Glastonbury*, which were always represented with a whip or rod for discipline. *Antiq. Glaston.* apud *T. Gale*, t. 1. p. 317.

§ *Hist. Elien.* apud *Gale*.

decorate the title pages, and initial letters, with great care. Towards the conclusion of the Heptarchy they ornamented them with gold and silver, besides the variety of colours they continued to use, as in the foregoing period. One of the most ancient specimens of writing among the Anglo-Saxons is a manuscript of the four gospels, written at the conclusion of the seventh century; the writing is very fair, and it is enriched with a variety of curious ornaments\*. From the appearance of the instrument with which they wrote, it seems to have been made of metal, and not any sort of quill†. Their ink appears, even at the present time, in manuscripts that have been carefully preserved, fresh and fair, so that it must have been made of a mixture of very durable materials; and it was in general laid on in a body; for, on passing the finger over it, it is frequently found to rise up from the vellum. It is certain that they sometimes wrote with a kind of size or glutinous substance, which they very dexterously gilt with thin leaves of gold or silver, and in this manner some of their books were ornamented; and indeed, one Saxon manuscript is yet extant, which, from the beginning to the end, is written in letters of gold, or rather gilt, which, in some particular points of view, has a very pompous appearance‡.

Poetry.

Never was poetry more admired and honoured than in the present period, even kings themselves were candidates for the laurel. Ælfred the Great was the best poet of his age. Poets were frequently chosen for the friends and favourites of the greatest monarchs, obtained a place at their own tables, and were loaded with favours and rewards. Nor was it among the Anglo-Saxon kings alone that poetry was so much esteemed; for, at this period, all the northern nations were equally fond of this art, and held those who excelled in it in equal veneration. Cnut, the Danish king of England, was not only a poet himself§, but had constantly in his court several Danish and Norwegian bards, whose poems he took great delight in hearing||; and, indeed, poetry was in such universal esteem, that it formed a great part of the education of the nobility.

Surprising effects of poetry.

In the histories of the northern nations many extraordinary instances are to be found of the astonishing power of poetry, by which every passion of the human mind was to be excited or appeased¶; and, indeed,

\* See plate XX. vol. 1. See also various specimens of writing, plate XVI. and the whole page plate XIV.

† See the representation of the pen taken from a very ancient Saxon MS. plate XVI. fig. 3, and the penknife, fig. 2, of the same plate.

‡ This MS. is preserved in the Cotton Library, and is marked *Vespasian A. VIII.*

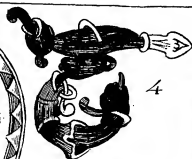
§ *Hist. Æliensis*, l. 2. cap. 27.

|| *Olai Wormii Literatura Danica*, p. 243.

¶ A remarkable instance of this is recorded in the ancient northern histories. Egill Skullagrim, a famous northern poet, had in a quarrel slain the son of Eric Bloodox, king of Norway; he was afterwards taken by Eric's queen, and sent into Northumberland, where Eric then was. When the poet was brought before the enraged monarch,



Fig. 1.



4



5

Uuer the thin uilleo oðar thesa  
uuerold' alla so samo anerdū soðar uppe

<sup>7</sup> 56 perð pond <sup>7</sup> soðat and  
**RESPONDENS IHS**  
<sup>cued</sup> <sup>ofo</sup> <sup>rona</sup>

**ONITTEUIN**  
<sup>in bipollum</sup>

**IUPOROCBOLIS AIS DICER**  
<sup>him</sup> <sup>cued</sup>

<sup>9</sup> laddor iorephyr

fæden in toþa

cyninge 7 prece

hine beronan.

<sup>10</sup> pelis pide 7 toðan.



autim in nodm  
eudb 7 drito in 7 sfn cndae  
utae solitennae quæm



11.

deed, their ancient bards would frequently boast of the effects of their poems \*. The poetical language of the northern poets was metaphorical and figurative in the highest degree; yet these metaphors were not such as depended upon the will or invention of the poet, but such as had received the stamp of public approbation from the more remote times. Their gods had a proportionable number of epithets according to their power and rank. Odin was called the Father of the Ages, the Supercillious, the Eagle, the Father of Verses, &c. and so of the other deities. Rivers were called the Sweat of the Earth, and the Blood of the Vallies; arrows were stiled the Daughters of Misfortune, the Hail-stones of Helmets: the eye was called the Torch of the Countenance, the Diamond of the Head: the grass and herbage, the Hair and Fleece of the Earth: the hair of the head was called the Forest of the Head, and, when white, the Snow of the Brain: the epithets for the earth were, the Vessel that floats on the ages, the Basis or Foundation of the Air, the Daughter of Night: night itself was called the Veil of Discourse and Cares: a combat, the Crash of Arms, the Shower of Darts, the Clangor of Swords, the Bath of Blood: the sea was stiled, the Field of Pirates, a ship, the Scate of the Pirates, the Horse of the Waves; and rocks the Bones of the Earth, &c. but this profusion of metaphors frequently rendered the sense of the poem very obscure, but more particularly so to the readers of the present age †.

Their rules of verification are very difficult to define from the vast variety of endings and measures of the verses; for they had no fewer than one hundred and thirty-six kinds of metre, without including rhyme; and this metre may be chiefly, if not altogether, reduced to different kinds of aliteration ‡.

The droquet, or common song, was most generally used, each verse of which consisted of six syllables, each distich of two lines, and each stanza of four distiches, or eight lines. The harmony of this verification was partly literal, and partly syllabical. The literary harmony consisted in three words in each distich beginning with the same letter; the syllabical harmony consisted of two syllables of similar sounds in each line, which were called the sonorous syllables. This syllabical harmony was perfect, when it consisted in the two similar syllables beginning with the same vowels and consonants; and imperfect, when they consisted of the same consonants, but not of the same vowels: the syllabical harmony might be imperfect in the first line, but it was always necessary for it to be perfect in the second §, so that this

monarch, he began to sing a song composed in his praise, with so much art and sweetness, that he softened his rage, and procured his pardon. Olaf Wormii Literat. Dani.---Five specimens of Runic poetry, &c. &c.

\* Northern Antiq. vol. 2.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 192, 193, &c.

‡ Ibid. vol. 1. page 401.

§ All these rules are illustrated in the following two lines, where, for distinction sake.

this alternative metre was capable of almost endless variations by changing the length of the verses, and the number or position of the sonorous letters or syllables.

Rhyme.

Rhyme was also very common among the Norman poets, for not a few of their poems, which are yet in being, are most exactly rhymed, and even some of them have double rhymes\*.

Variety of poems.

The poems of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes consisted of so many various species that it will be impossible to enumerate them. Many of them, whilst they were pagans, were hymns or songs of praise, composed in honour of their deities, which, on their conversion to Christianity, were changed in favour of the saints and martyrs, for whom they held the highest veneration; besides these, they had martial songs for the battle; others, celebrating the acts of great heroes; love songs for the entertainment of the fair sex; satirical compositions for the exposing of vice; elegies for sorrowful occasions, and sprightly airs for the promotion of mirth and jollity †.

Music.

If poetry was universally admired at this period, music was no less the object of general esteem. The poet and the musician were constantly the same, and the one appears to have been inseparable from the other. Alfred the Great was very skillful in music, which was of such advantage to him, that, during the time of his distress, he disguised himself as an ancient minstrel, and went into the Danish camp, where he performed his part with such excellency that he charmed the commanders, and was permitted to stay there till he had made every necessary observation concerning their strength, and discovered their important councils ‡. Those who excelled in this art were highly esteemed, and usually much caressed by the greatest monarchs. The famous Egil Skullagrim, mentioned above, on account of his superior abilities in poetry and music, was so highly esteemed by king Æthelstan, that he could deny him nothing that he requested §.

Knowledge of music necessary.

Some skill in vocal and instrumental music was necessary at this period, even in private life, to make a man respectable in company; for it was customary, at all the convivial meetings, for every man in his turn to take a harp, and play upon it whilst he sung a song agreeable to its notes to amuse the assembly ||.

Of

fake, the sonorous letters and syllables are put in capitals,

CHRISTUS CAPUT NOSTRUM  
CORONAT BONIS.

The letter C in this couplet is the sonorous letter; IST and OST the sonorous syllables in the first line, but imperfect, not having the same vowel at the beginning; and ON-ON the sonorous syllables in the second line perfect, because they consist of the same vowels and consonants.

\* Northern Antiq. vol. 1. p. 399, note\*.

† Vide Hiccefi Thesau. vol. 1.

‡ Malmfb. lib. 2. cap 10.

§ Ang. Jonas Iceland, 1. 2. p. 129.

|| A remarkable instance relative to the truth of this is mentioned by Bede in his Ecclesiastical History. He tells us, that Cadman had never learned to play upon the harp, or to sing; so that if he was in company, and they took down the harp to play and sing each in his turn, when the



Of all other instruments of music; the harp was the most esteemed, <sup>The harp.</sup> not only by our northern ancestors, but, by almost every nation in Europe. Those who played upon it were esteemed gentlemen by law, and their persons secured from injuries by severe penalties: those who excelled in it were readily admitted into the most splendid assemblies, and distinguished with marks of the greatest respect by people of the most exalted rank\*.

The account of the other musical instruments, as enumerated by an <sup>Other instru-</sup> ancient historian who lived during the Heptarchy, has already been <sup>ments of music.</sup> given in the former volume †. To those we may add the following, which are mentioned by the writers of the middle ages, namely, the lute, the cymbal, the citola, the lyre, the syrtrum, and the campanula.

The form of the greater part of the ancient instruments are not <sup>Form of many</sup> known in the present age; some few of them, however, are preserved <sup>ancient musical</sup> in the manuscript delineations of the Anglo-Saxons, and these have <sup>instruments</sup> been thought, in every respect, worthy a place in the present work. <sup>now lost.</sup>

In the former volume some notice was taken of the organ mentioned <sup>Of the organ.</sup> by an ancient Anglo-Saxon writer, that it was probably a very simple instrument, composed of a certain number of pipes of different lengths and sizes, and was blown into by the mouth. The representation of an instrument of this sort accompanies this chapter ‡, taken from an ancient manuscript written during the tenth century, where it is positively called an organ §. We must not imagine that organs blown with bellows, and played upon with keys, were unknown in England at the period that manuscript was written; for there is the clearest evidence that they were not only known, but also erected in churches. The famous Dunstan gave to the church of Malmbsbury, an organ with brass pipes ¶; and Alwyn, alderman of all England, who flourished about the same time, laid out the sum of thirty Saxon pounds in building an organ in the church at Ramsey Abbey, which had pipes of brass or copper, and was blown into by bellows, and played upon with keys, and was also furnished with proper stops ¶. Organs of this kind seem to have been known in the east as early as the fourth century, but at

the harp approached Cædman, he would instantly rise up, and depart to his own house “*ahamed*,” (as Ælfred in the Saxon version expresses it) that he was deficient in so general an accomplishment.

\* *Leges Angl. apud Lindenbrog, p. 485.*  
See the figure of the Anglo-Saxon harp, plate XVII. fig. 5.

† Vide vol. 1. p. 352.

‡ Plate XVII. fig. 4.

§ The MS. from which this delineation is taken is a Psalter, and the whole of the

picture (which accompanies the 137th psalm) represents the Hebrews in their captivity at Babylon, where they are described by the Psalmist as having hung their “*harps*” (for so our English version has it) upon the trees. In this delineation such instruments as this are suspended upon the trees; and in the text they are called organs.—“*In salicibus in medio ejus suspendimus organa nostra.*”

¶ W. Malmbs. de Pontib.

¶ Hist. Ramfens. apud Gale, c. 54.

what

what time they made their way hither, cannot be ascertained; but very probably not long before the above-mentioned period, because the ancient historians speak of them with the greatest admiration, which seems a good argument that they were new and uncommon.

The violin and lyre, &c.

The violin consisted of four strings, as in the present age, and was played upon much in the same manner\*: they had also a sort of lyre with four strings, which were not struck by the fingers, but by a small rod, probably of metal, having a round ball or knob at the end†; and this instrument seems to have been chiefly used for dancing, when it was accompanied by two flutes, both of them played upon at once by the same person‡.

Effect of music.

The great and astonishing effects of the power of music, as related by our best ancient historians, make it certain that the knowledge of it was very extensive in those early ages; for they speak of it as able to raise and inflame the passions of the human heart; to elevate the hero's courage; to dispel sorrow; revive the spirits of those fatigued; improve their joys; cure diseases, and promote not only the health of the body, but the happiness of the mind§.

Psalms great part of the religious worship.

The Anglo-Saxons were prodigiously fond of psalmody, for the greater part of the church worship consisted in singing; and in some cathedrals and larger monasteries, the singing continued day and night by a constant succession of priests, and, from time to time, they were joined by the laity as occasion served, who were equally delighted with this perpetual harmony||. Indeed, most of their private devotions consisted in singing a number of psalms, which was looked upon as the most efficacious way of appeasing the wrath of Almighty God. The introduction of organs was a great improvement to this taste with respect to the public worship, for with the assistance of those notes, a much better effect must have been produced than when the chorus was entirely vocal.

One of the established rules among the voluntary societies that were formed in imitation of the tythings, was, that every member should sing two psalms daily, one for all the members of the fraternity living, and the other for all that had been members, but were now dead; and, at the death of a member, each of those that survived should sing six psalms¶ for the good of his soul. Almost all the penances imposed by the clergy were to be redeemed by singing a certain number of psalms, or repeating the Lord's Prayer so many times\*\*.

\* Vide plate XVII. fig. 1.

† Plate XVII. fig. 10. is the lyre here mentioned, and fig. 11, the instrument with which it was struck.

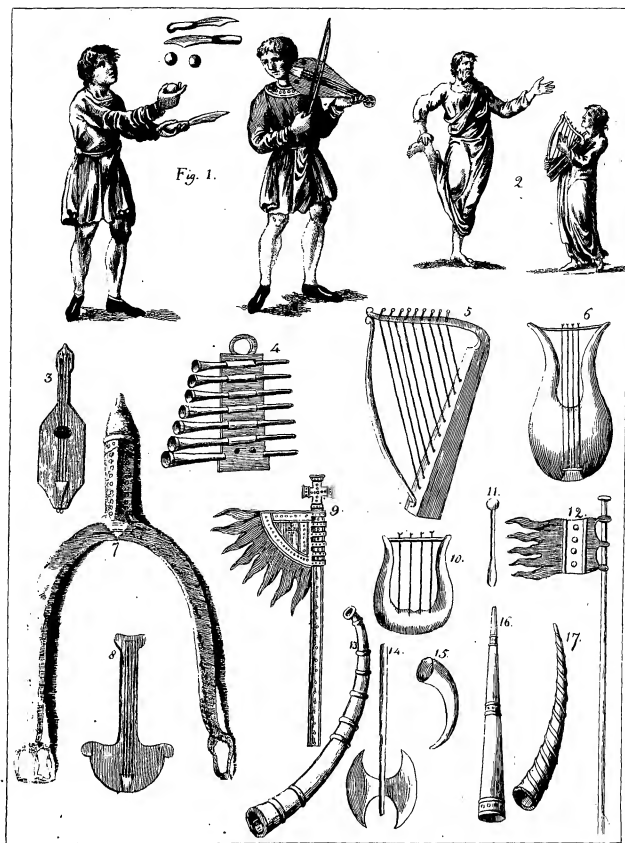
‡ See vol. 1. of the manners and customs of the English, plate XVII. fig. 4. the other instruments of music upon plate XVII. are described in the Appendix.

§ Bedæ opera, vol. 1.

|| Muratori Dissert. T. 4.

¶ Hicckesii Dissert. Epist. p. 22.

\*\* If a penitent was condemned to fast for such a number of days, the fasting might be redeemed by his singing the *Pater Noster*, and the 119th psalm six times over for each day's fast. Johnson's Canons, A. D. 963.



## C H A P. X.

*Particular Manners and Customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and the Danes.*

THE persons and general character of our Saxon ancestors were slightly touched upon in the preceding volume \*, so that very little is necessary to be added here; there is indubitable evidence that the Anglo-Saxon youth were fair and beautiful †, more particularly the females, who in general possessed a large share of personal charms. The Danes were very fond of their hair, which was in general fair coloured, like their complexions; many of those who resided in Northumberland, are said to have had red hair ‡, and their eyes were most commonly blue, having something particularly stern in their countenances when they were inflamed with anger §.

There is not the least reason to suppose that the Anglo-Saxons were by any means defective in genius, but that the universal cloud of ignorance and superstition which darkened those ages, prevented their shining with more lustre. But yet, even amidst all these manifest disadvantages, some few men arose who possessed an uncommon share of genius and mental endowments, such were Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuinus, Ælfred the Great, Aferius, &c.

Notwithstanding the monks, through whose gloomy medium the character of our Anglo-Saxons is transmitted, have frequently been very bitter and severe in their accusations against their country-men, the laity especially, declaring them to be miserably corrupt in their manners, and guilty of almost every wickedness and excess ||, yet some have been candid enough to acknowledge, that though these vices were too general, yet they were by no means universal, and that, however depraved the manners of the greater part of them were, yet good and virtuous people were very frequently to be met with ¶.

The piety of the Anglo-Saxons at this age, was clouded with superstition and error, which the clergy failed not to improve in the minds of the people to their own advantage, and spared no opportunities that offered to persuade rich men to become monks themselves, or make their children such, by which means they obtained possession of their

\* Vol. I. part V. chap. X. p. 353.

† Bede Ecc. Hist. l. 2. cap. I. et Eddius Vita Wilfredi cap. VI.

‡ Culver Antiq. Germ. p. 96.

§ Pelloutier, t. I. p. 193.

|| Sermo Lupi, Hicckesi Dissertat. Epist. p. 104, 105.

¶ W. Malmsh. lib. 3. cap. I.

persons and estates, and when they could not prevail so far upon them, they taught them to believe, that the being buried near the relics of some famous saint would promote the happiness of their soul, and this privilege was not to be obtained without a considerable sum of money, or very rich presents. They also exhorted them to build monasteries, or at their death to leave their possessions for the benefit of religious houses, which they pretended was the surest method of obtaining pardon for their sins, and securing themselves places in heaven\*. The priests were also continually talking of the end of the world and the day of judgment, which they represented as near at hand†, and at the same time they told their rich and opulent auditors, that what they gave to the monasteries contributed greatly to their future welfare in the other world, for by that means they obtained the prayers of the priests; hence arose the custom of bequeathing money to monasteries and churches, that the monks might make prayers for the good of the donor's soul, which they imagined promoted its happiness, and secured its repose‡. It was also customary for the monks to grant to some rich man an estate, which he was to enjoy during his life, upon condition, that at his death that estate, and another of equal value belonging to the rich man, should revert to the monastery to which the first estate belonged. By these and such artifices, the clergy obtained some share of the wealth or estates of almost every opulent man at his decease, which continually increasing, must have made them very rich. But their covetousness augmented with their riches, and to such lengths did they run in pursuit of wealth, that they were not ashamed to make use of the most infamous arts and impositions to obtain it from the deluded laity, esteeming even the grossest frauds as highly meritorious, so that the church was thereby enriched; many proofs of this fact might be brought, but one may be sufficient. Ætheric who was bishop of Dorchester in the reign of king Cnut, piously made a Danish nobleman drunk, and whilst he was in that state, bought a fine estate of him for a mere trifle, and for this impious fraud the holy bishop received great commendations, because he gave the estate to the abbey of Ramsey. In short, so much did the persuasions of the clergy prevail over the minds of the infatuated people, that before the end of this period they had more than one third of all the lands of England in their possession, besides tythes of all the rest, and vast profusions of wealth, in money, plate and jewels.

\* Hist. Ramsen, p. 397.

† Hicetii Dissert. Epist. p. 77.

‡ This they called giving a part of their estates to their *own souls*. Thus says Asseus.—King Æthelwulf, like a man of wisdom, made a testament in writing,

wherein he divided his estate between his children and *his own soul*, what he gave to his children need not be mentioned, but what he gave to *his soul* was as follows, &c. Asse. Vit. Ælfredi.

The native valour of the Anglo-Saxons, as well as that enthusiastic love of liberty, was greatly diminished during this period; the fondness for a monastic life was one of the causes of this change, by which, and the doctrine of Christianity, their ferocity was abated, and they became more timid and peaceable. Their best historians inform us, that at their first arrival in Britain they were fierce, warlike and impetuous, but on their conversion to Christianity, their valour declined by degrees, so that towards the conclusion of this æra, they are said to have been far more esteemable for their devotions, than their warlike disposition\*.

The valour of the Anglo-Saxons decreases.

It was this great decrease in valour, that facilitated the conquest of the Danes, who being Pagans, still retained the ferocity of their natural tempers, and proved at last so greatly superior to the Anglo-Saxons in bravery and conduct, that the latter could hardly ever be prevailed upon to face them in the day of battle, though they might manifestly have the advantage †. The Danes made every possible advantage of the weakness and timidity of the Saxons, whom they treated with such brutal inhumanity as can scarcely be credited, whilst on the other hand the shameful and abject submission of the Saxons was little less extraordinary ‡.

The conquest of the Danes to what owing.

The Danes or inhabitants of Scandinavia (which comprehended the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway) were a people of a fierce intrepid spirit, and were very formidable at sea, by the possessions of vast fleets, as well as upon land, by powerful armies; nor is it surprizing that they were such excellent warriors, when we consider the various causes that contributed to make them fond of a martial life. In the first place, their religion taught them to believe that Odin their great god delighted in war and bloodshed, and that he bestowed the highest rewards upon heroes, and such as died with their swords in their hands, and received them after death into his palace, where they were to enjoy a continual succession of happiness and content: and this belief inspired them with a contempt for life. In the second place, their education was conducive to the same end, many of them were born in their fleets or camps, and trained up from their infancy in continual scenes of blood and slaughter, and as soon

Character of the Danes.

\* W. Malmf. lib. 3. cap. 1.

† "How long (says an ancient author who lived in the reign of king Æthelred the second) is it since the English obtained a victory over the Danes, those pirates are now become so bold, that one puts ten and sometimes more to flight! — How often do two or three troops of Danes drive the English army from sea to sea, to our eternal shame! — But so abject are we become, as to worship those, who trample on us with indignity." Then he proceeds to mention

some horrid submissions of the Anglo-Saxons too shameful to be inserted here. Sermo Lupi Epif. Hicsefi Dissert. Epif. p. 103.

‡ To such a length was it carried, that as some have declared, when an Englishman met a Dane upon a bridge, or in a narrow path where he could not avoid him, as soon as he saw him, he uncovered his head, and stood in a bowing posture till the Dane passed him and was gone out of sight. Pontopiden Gesta et Velt Dau. 1, 2. &c.

as they could wield the sword, they were taught the use of it. In the third place, the uncultivated state of their country made piratical expeditions absolutely necessary; hence valour and bravery were the only steps to riches and honour\*.

Their daring  
behaviour in  
battle.

The Danes were bold and audacious in their attacks, considering but little the superiority of the enemy in numbers; and indeed one of their martial laws imposed, that every man who would acquire the character of a brave warrior, should always attack two enemies, to stand firm against three, to retire only a pace from four, and to fly from no less than five†: indeed there are many instances of wonderful actions performed by some of these northern heroes, but perhaps none more striking than that which happened at the battle which Harold the second fought against his brother Tosti, and the king of Norway at Stamford, October 24, A. D. 1066, where, after the Norwegians were obliged to retire, the pursuit of the English army was retarded for a long time by the desperate resistance of a single Norwegian, who had posted himself upon the bridge, where he maintained his footing, and slew with his battle-ax not less than forty soldiers of Harold's army, who attempted to force their way over, and would have resisted still longer, if he had not been slain at last by a stratagem‡. As the Danes were delighted with nothing more than to have their valour and martial accomplishments extolled, so the calling them "Nothing-†," which was a term of contempt, was an offence so aggravating, that nothing could possibly expiate but the blood of the offender§.

Cruelty of the  
Danes.

The Danes, from the nature of their education, and being constantly inured to sights of blood and slaughter, were strangers to every tender and humane idea, and the most shocking cruelties were practised by them as sports and pastimes. What a lamentable picture is drawn by historians of the distress and miseries of the English during the eighth and ninth centuries, when the Danes, like inhuman savages, destroyed all before them with fire and sword, involving whole towns and cities, with their wretched inhabitants, in the devouring flames, and those who attempted to escape from their burning houses, were cut to pieces with battle-axes! Nor could the cries and supplications of men, women and children, make the least impression upon the unrelenting hearts of these dreadful enemies: the most tempting bribes, and humblest offers of becoming slaves had no effect; all the places through which they passed exhibited so many horrid scenes of misery and desolation; venerable old men lay massacred before their own

\* Northern Antiq. vol. I. Bartholin, &c.

† Bartholin de causa Contemp. a Dan. Mort. C. 7.

‡ W. Malmf. lib. II. cap. 13.

§ This word signifies a dastardly fellow.

¶ Northern Antiq. vol. I. p. 219.

doors;

doors; whole streets were covered with mangled bodies of young men and children; matrons and virgins, being first publicly polluted, were also put to death\*; nay, so totally were the wretched barbarians devoid of feeling, that it was a common pastime amongst them to tear the infants of the English from the breasts of their mothers, and tossing them up in the air, catch them upon their spears as they fell down†. In short, the cruelty and insolence of the Danes were so great, that their very name was odious and detestable to the English for many ages after they had ceased to oppress the land; inasmuch, that an imperious and haughty man, by way of contempt and detestation, was called a Lord Dane‡.

Indeed, although the doctrine of Christianity in some measure softened the minds of these ferocious men, it was but by slow degrees; for the Danes, as well as the Anglo-Saxons, even at the end of the present period, may have many instances of cruelty and oppression laid to their charge. What can be more shocking than the barbarity of earl Godwin, who, when he had seized upon prince Ælfred, the brother of Edward the Confessor, at Guilford, on his way to London, was not content with having the unfortunate prince in his power, but defeated and apprehended his guards, some of whom he imprisoned, some he sold for slaves, others he maimed by cutting off their legs and arms, and others again he tortured by pulling the skins from their heads, and by various torments massacred six hundred men§.

Tyranny and oppression among the rich and powerful are reckoned amongst the vices of this period; in the reign of Æthelred the Second (at which time a kind of aristocracy took place) we are assured, that the poor and indigent were most cruelly treated; their persons, and those of their children, were frequently seized upon by force, and sold for slaves; widows were unjustly compelled to marry, and if they refused they were cruelly oppressed, and reduced to misery and want. In the after times, when the Godwin family had obtained such influence in the kingdom, the sons of that earl were guilty of the most flagrant outrages and oppressions, for if they saw any handsome estate, or country seat that pleased their fancy, they instantly gave orders to their attendants to murder the proprietor of it and his family by night, and then obtained the grant of it themselves. Such were the men who, at that time, were judges and rulers in the land||.

The Danes were fond of a violent death, and the chief cause of it was, their belief that the spirits of all who departed from this world

Instance of Godwin's cruelty.

Tyranny and oppression.

The Danes fond of a violent death.

\* J. Walsingford apud Gale.

† Anglia Sacra, T. 2. p. 135. Vide plate IV. of this volume, which is the copy of an illumination in a MS. paraphrase of the four gospels, and said formerly to have belonged to king Cnut. This repre-

sents "*The murder of the Innocents*;" but, at the same time, exhibits a scene of that sort of cruelty described above.

‡ H. Hunt.

§ S. Dunelm.

|| Hunt. lib. 6.



in a violent manner, went immediately to the hall of Odin, where they were received by that god with the highest marks of approbation and esteem\*. These expectations, joined with their natural ferocity and love of military fame, entirely erased from their bosoms the idea of fear, so that instead of groaning or complaining at the wounds they received in battle, or the approach of death, they expressed their joy by laughter and songs†. Those who fought bravely, and fell with honour in the battle, were not lamented by their friends, because it was esteemed the highest felicity a man could arrive at to loose his life in some great exploit. Siward, a Danish chief, who was earl of Northumberland during the reign of Edward the Confessor, being told that his son was slain in battle, made earnest enquiries if his wounds were received in the front of his body, or in his back, and being answered in the front, he cried out in a transport of joy, that his son had died worthy of his birth‡.

Old age a dishonour.

The Danes were frightened at the approach of old age, to prevent which, they frequently prevailed upon their friends to kill them, or slew themselves. Dying in a natural way, or upon a bed, was highly distasteful to them; and Siward, the Danish earl of Northumberland, mentioned above, though a Christian, retained so much of the ancient manners of his ancestors, that, when he found his end approaching in a natural way, he was extremely uneasy, and lamented that he had escaped death in the many battles he had fought (for he was a great warrior) to die in a disgraceful manner like a beast: he, therefore, entreated his friends to dress him in his armour, to put his helmet on his head, his shield upon his left arm, his battle-ax in the right, and to gird his sword about him, that he might die at least in the habit of a warrior, though he had not been so happy as to fall in battle §.

Piracies of the Danes.

The fondness of the Danes for pyratral expeditions is so notorious, that we need make but few remarks upon that subject in this place; and not only persons of inferior rank were engaged in these expeditions, but even kings and princes, some of whom acquired such vast wealth and fame, and such strong fleets, that they were called Sea Kings ||.

Credulity and curiosity of the Saxons & Danes.

If the Anglo-Saxons, in the former age, were famous for their credulity, they certainly cannot be esteemed less so in the present. Of this fact we need not produce any other proofs than the implicit faith they placed in the pretended miracles, and other shameful artifices made use of by the priests, many of them so gross and absurd that it seems scarcely possible that so much knavery should be on the one side, and credulity upon the other. As they were credulous, so both

\* Northern Antiq. vol. 1 & 2.

† Ibid. vol. 1. p. 206, 207, &c.

‡ H. Hunt. lib. 6.

§ Ibid. Vide Bartholin, &c.

|| Vide Dr. Henry History of Brit. vol. 2.

they

they and the Danes were equally curious, and desirous of prying into the secrets of futurity, which rendered them frequently the dupes of pretended fortune-tellers, who were chiefly of the female sex; and some of them were in high esteem with the great, and drew so much wealth from those who came to consult them, that they lived with splendor and magnificence equal to that of the greatest nobility, having numerous retinues constantly attending upon them\*. These toothless prophetesses (for they were almost always old women) were often invited to the courts of kings and princes, where they were received with the greatest respect and most profound civility, besides being well rewarded for the answers they returned to the questions that were put to them †.

Chastity was one of the chief virtues with which the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons were endowed, and which, at their establishment in England, seems also to have been one of their great characteristics after their conversion to Christianity. The clergy, in attempting to extend this virtue to a greater height than the law of nature would admit of, almost destroyed it; and the Danish soldiers, who in the reign of Æthelstan and his successors, were quartered in England, being idle, insolent and lustful, corrupted many of the Anglo-Saxon ladies by dressing better than the Englishmen ‡, so that towards the latter end of this period, chastity declined so fast that scarce any vestiges of its original purity were left. It is to this dissolution of manners that the clergy of that time impute the various woes that fell so heavy on the English nation §.

We have already made some remarks upon the fondness of the Anglo-Saxons for their own relations, and how strenuously a whole family would revenge all affronts done to any individual of that family; for any person who offended one was instantly accounted an enemy to the whole, and not only the offender, but his relations also, though perfectly innocent, became equally the objects of vengeance to the injured party; because, though they had no hand in the crime, they protected the culprit; and this unjust vengeance was carried to such a length, as to render it absolutely necessary in the reign of king Edmund, the successor of Æthelstan, to make a law, forbidding that for the future the relations of a murderer should be obnoxious to the resentment of the friends of the deceased, but that the murderer alone should be the

\* Bartholin mentions one of these old women named Heida, who was famous for her skill in divinations and magic. She frequented public entertainments, predicting weather, and telling fortunes, having constantly a train of thirty men and fifteen maid servants attendants upon her. Bartholin, lib. 3. cap. 4.

† Erick's Ranga Saga, apud Bartholin, p. 691.

‡ J. Walingford.

§ Sermo Lupi, apud Hicetii Disert. Epist.

subject of their vengeance; and also, if any one should avenge himself upon any other than the murderer, he should forfeit all his goods, and be prosecuted as an enemy to the king. Another law also required, that all differences between any two clans or families should be settled in an amicable manner\*. However, towards the latter end of this period, among other depravities that crept into the state in general, that of undutifulness and disregard for relations was not the least; for in the reign of Æthelred the Second, the English are accused of having as little love for their relations as strangers: and it is further added, that the natural affection from parents to their children, and from children to the parents, and brothers to each other, were greatly diminished†.

Vices of the  
Anglo-Saxons.

Murders and thefts were very frequent among the Anglo-Saxons; and perjury may be reckoned among one of the chief national vices‡: this latter might, in some measure, be owing to the vast number of oaths that were taken at this period, which greatly diminished the solemnity of them, and the multitude of compurgators and witnesses that were required; so that frequently, when a cause of great consequence was brought before the magistrates for trial, the compurgators and witnesses stood drawn up on either side, like two little armies, ready to swear whole volleys of oaths against each other§. Bribery was too frequently practised, especially towards the conclusion of this period; and even Edward the Confessor, whose sanctity is so much boasted of by the monkish writers, is not ashamed to own in an award, that a handsome bribe from one of the parties influenced his decision||. Intemperance in eating and drinking at this period were prevailing vices, both among the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes, of which the latter in particular were the most notorious. The vice of intemperance was common to the people of all ranks, in which they often spent whole days and nights without intermission; and, indeed, all meetings, public or private, usually terminated in rioting and excessive drinking, not even excepting ¶ religious festivals, at which times it was usual for them to drink large draughts in honour of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the twelve apostles, and other venerated saints\*\*. In the reign of Eadgar the Peaceable, the vice of immoderate drinking (which our historians tell us, the English learned of the Danes) prevailed so greatly, that laws were found necessary to reform it; and that prince, to prevent quarrels that arose in public houses from any one's drinking more than his share, which it seems was very frequent, caused certain pegs or knobs to be †put at proper distances into

\* *Leges Edmundi* apud Wilkins.

† *Sermo Lupi* apud Hicckel.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Sometimes consisting of a thousand. *Antiq.* vol. 1. cap. 12. p. 311.

|| *Hist. Ramsien.* c. 113.

¶ *W. Malmsh. lib.* 3. cap. 1. p. 58.

\*\* *Bartholin.* lib. 2. c. 12. Northern

*Hist. Elin.* cap. 35.

each drinking cup, and no man was to drink beyond those knobs at one draught under a severe penalty, which was also to be inflicted upon those who should compel others to drink beyond them\*.

We have already taken notice that the Anglo-Saxons were famous for their respectful behaviour to the fair sex, to whom they paid the greatest regard. They were admitted into all great assemblies, and their opinions claimed every degree of attention: many of them were enrolled in the catalogue of saints, and became the objects of veneration. Various severe laws were also made to preserve their persons and honour from insult†. It is true, that the higher class of ladies fell into some disgrace occasioned by the abandoned wickedness of Eadburge, who either through mistake or design poisoned her husband Beorhtic‡, king of the West Saxons, which so highly exasperated that people that they caused a law to be made, by which the wife of the king was deprived of all her honours, and even the title of queen§. But this law did not continue long in force, for the clergy expressed their highest dislike to it, calling it a perverse and detestable decree, and contrary to the customs of all the nations descended from the Germans. It was entirely abolished by Æthelwulf, the son of Egbert, who married Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald, king of France (about fifty-two years after its establishment) and caused her to be placed upon his throne with all the honours that the queens preceding Eadburge had enjoyed||.

The laws of the Anglo-Saxons, relative to marriage, we have already seen¶; but in this place it may not be amiss to take notice of the particular forms and ceremonies observed, when two people were married. The wedding was always celebrated at the expence of the bridegroom, and at his own house, and the day before the marriage was spent in feasting and jollity with the bridegroom and such friends as he invited to the wedding. The next morning, all those friends being armed and mounted on horseback, proceeded in great order to the residence of the bride (under the conduct of one who was called the foremost man\*\*) and she being delivered to them was brought back to the house of the bridegroom; this martial array was in honour of the bride, as well as to protect her from any attempts that her former lovers might make to seize upon her person. She was led by a matron called the brides-woman, and followed by a troop of young maidens who were called the brides-maids, attended also by the mundbora or guardian, with the rest of her male relations. When she reached the dwelling of her intended husband, she was received by him, to whom she was instantly solemnly betrothed by her guardian. This ceremony

\* Malmfb. lib. 2. cap. 8.

† Willms Leg. Ang. Sax.

‡ Vol. 1. p. 119.

§ Asser. Annal.

Vol. II.

|| Ibid.

¶ Muratori, vol. 2. p. 111.

\*\* pope pirctaman.

being finished, the bridegroom, bride, guardian and all their attendants, proceeded to the church attended by music, where the happy couple received the nuptial benediction from the priest. If the bride was a virgin, the benediction was performed under a veil, or square piece of cloth, held before her by a tall man to conceal her blushes, but if the bride was a widow, the veil was thought unnecessary\*. The nuptial benediction being compleated, both bride and bridegroom were crowned with garlands of flowers, usually kept in the church for that purpose †, and after all these ceremonies were finished, the whole company returned to the bridegroom's house, where the nuptial feast was prepared, and the whole day was spent by the youth of either sex, in mirth and dancing, whilst the graver sort, by way of amusement, had recourse to the liquor which was provided in great abundance. At night the women who attended upon the bride, conducted her to her chamber, where they undressed her and placed her in the marriage bed, which was no sooner done, than the bridegroom was also brought in by the men, and when he was in bed, he, the bride, and all who were present, drank the marriage health, after which all the company retired ‡. The next morning the same parties came into the chamber of the new married couple, to hear the husband declare what gift § he would bestow upon his wife, when his relations became sureties to those of his wife, that he would perform what he then had promised. The feasting continued for several days, till all the provisions which had been provided were consumed, and all the guests at their departure, made the bridegroom some present, in order to defray the extraordinary expences he had been at ||.

Names and  
surnames.

Children, soon after their birth, were obliged by law to be baptised ¶, and names were constantly given them expressive of some virtue or good quality, which they wished the child should affect as he grew up, as Ælfréd, which in our present language signifies all peace;—Alwyne, beloved by all;—Bede, prayer;—Æthelbald, noble and valiant;—Hewald, a supporter of equity, and the like. Several people of one name, living near each other, were distinguished by a second name being added, expressive of their persons or manners; as, the Long, the Short, the Black, the Good, the Peaceable, the Bold, the Great, or else by the name of the place where the person lived, or even sometimes by his

\* Muratori, vol. II. p. 4.

† Olai Magni, p. 553.

‡ Here we may note that the wedding dresses of the bride, bridegroom, and three of each of their attendants were of a fashion and colour peculiar to the ceremony, and might be only wore at that time; these dresses anciently belonged to the minstrels who attended the wedding, but in later

times they were given to some church or monastery. Stiernhook, lib. II. cap. I.

§ This gift was called *Morgæn-gift* or *Morning-gift*, which became the property of the wife alone.

|| Stiernhook ut sup.

¶ Leges Inæ cap. II. apud Wilkins et Lambarde.

father's

father's name; but these surnames did not descend to the children and become family names, as was usual after the Norman conquest; for that custom most likely did not take place during this period, or if it did, it certainly was not until the reign of Edward the Confessor, who, it is true, introduced many Norman customs into England\*.

The education of the Anglo-Saxon youth consisted chiefly in in-<sup>Education.</sup>structing them in martial exercises and rural sports, as hunting, hawking, and various athletic games, which contributed to the increase of their bodily strength, and inured them from their infancy to endure fatigue; as to reading, or the study of the polite arts and sciences, those formed no part of the education of secular youth, the acquisition of such knowledge being held only necessary among those who were designed for the church (and even by them it was frequently grievously neglected;) nor were princes of the royal blood, or the sons of the greatest noblemen any happier in this particular than those of the meanest rank, for we are well assured that Ælfred the Great, at twelve years of age, had not been taught to distinguish one letter from another, though the greatest care had been taken to make him master of the other branches of education, consisting of martial exercises and rural sports †.

The Anglo-Saxons before their conversion to Christianity, whenever<sup>Custom of the</sup> they went to war, were accompanied by their priests, whose office it was to correct offenders in the army ‡, and also to pray for its success; some vestiges of this custom still remained after they had received the light of the gospel, for though the Christian priests appear to have been deprived of their authority in administering military correction, yet they continued to attend the armies in great numbers, to pray for its success, and to render their prayers more efficacious, it was usual for them to carry with them the most precious relics §. In like manner the Danes, who retained their idolatry much longer than the Anglo-Saxons, constantly sacrificed to their gods, before they set out on an expedition, and after their conversion to Christianity, a gang of these pirates being ready to set sail with the design of robbing and murdering all they met, would first of all confess their sins to the priest, perform such penances as he ordered, and take the holy sacrament at their departure, that God might favour their cruel and inhuman undertakings ||.

The office of creating knights, at this period, belonged to the priest<sup>Method of cre-</sup> as well as to the king, and the manner in which the ceremony was<sup>ating knights.</sup> performed was as follows. The evening before the day of consecration, he that was to be made a knight went to the church, where having made full confession of his sins before the bishop, abbot or priest

\* Verstegan, Camden's Remains, &c.

§ Hist. Ramsien, c. 72.

† Aferius Vita Ælfredi.

|| Sax. Grammat. l. 14.

‡ Tacit de morib. Germ.

attending, and received absolution for the same, he was to abide all night in prayer and pious devotion. On the morrow after he had heard divine service, he was to offer his sword upon the altar, which, when the priest had blessed upon the four gospels, was hung about his neck, and the ceremony was finished by a benediction from the priest\*. When the king created a knight, there does not appear to have been so much form, for we are assured that Ælfred the Great, made Æthelstan his grandson (then a youth) a knight, by putting on his shoulders a foldier's cloak of scarlet, and girding round him a girdle ornamented with precious stones, from which was suspended a Saxon sword in a sheath of gold †. After the Norman conquest, the priests were deprived of the power of creating knights, which was then solely vested in the king.

Great retinues. Great retinues were much affected by the Anglo-Saxon kings, who never stirred abroad without a considerable number of nobility, knights and dependants. Cnut the Great, who was the richest and most magnificent prince of his time in Europe, never appeared in public without a retinue of three thousand men well mounted and completely armed; these attendants were called housecarles, and formed a corps of body guards or household troops, for the honour and safety of their prince ‡.

Wheel carriages.

The most common method of travelling amongst the Anglo-Saxon nobility was on horseback, though it is certain that chariots were not unknown to them even during the Heptarchy §. The form of those carriages at that early period cannot so easily be known, but during the monarchy we meet with them delineated in the ancient manuscripts, where they appear chiefly to be of two sorts, the first only fit for the reception of one person, which in its shape is not at all unlike the light carts made use of by the farmers in the country at this present day; this carriage had only two wheels, and was drawn by two horses abreast ¶.—The other was larger and more capacious; it was also drawn by two horses abreast, though sometimes they are seen with four horses, which are then put two and two abreast. The body of the carriage consists of a hammock suspended by two hooks fastened to upright posts, one at the front, and the other at the back of the carriage; these sort of carriages seem to have been made larger or smaller as occasion required, for some of them contained only one person, and others five or six ¶¶. There is another kind of carriage much more simple than any of the former, which appears in the an-

\* Ingulphus Hist. Croylandæ.

† Malmib. lib. II. cap. VI.

‡ Sueno Agonis, p. 152.

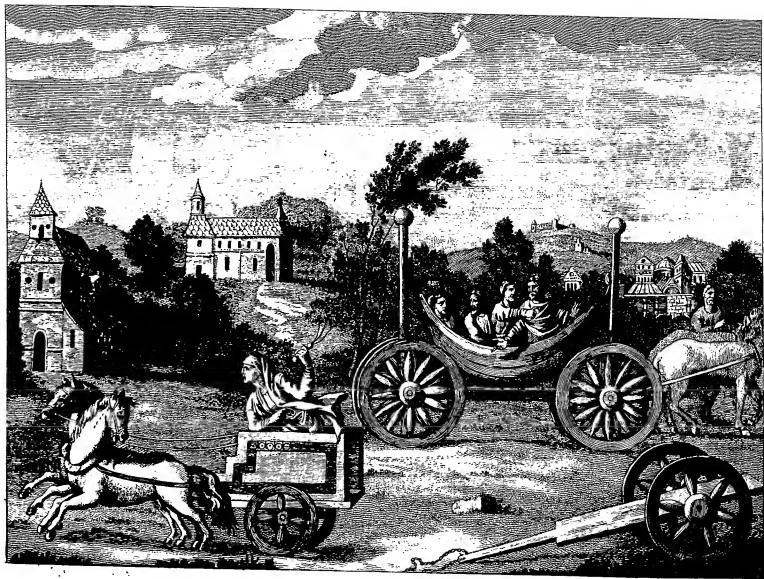
§ Eddius in his life of Wilfrid, tells us, that the queen of Northumberland tra-

velled "from place to place in her chariot."

Vita Wilfridæ ap. Gale, cap. XXXIII.

¶ See plate XVIII.

¶¶ Ibid.





cient delineations, consisting of a large long flat board made fast on an axle-tree supported by two wheels. The driver stands upon this board to manage two horses or oxen, which are put one on each side the pole, and fastened with the chain that is there seen at the end of it \*.

The Anglo-Saxons and the Danes appear to have had but few domestic employments, to engage their attention, for which reason, when the state was not at war, and the inclemency of the weather prevented their stirring abroad in pursuit of the rural sports, their time was generally spent in idleness and intemperance. But the ladies, much to their credit, employed the chief of their time in managing the affairs of the family, appointing tasks to the servants, and what leisure they could find was spent in spinning, weaving or working embroidery †. The Anglo-Saxons, and the Danes, considered the warm bath as one of the greatest luxuries of life, and to frequent the bath at least once a week was a necessary duty for those to perform who wished to secure the respect of the ladies; but if bathing in warm water was agreeable, the going into cold water was disliked by them in the highest degree, for which cause the abstaining from the former and practising the latter was frequently inflicted upon them by the way of a heavy penance ‡.

We have already had occasion more than once to remark how much the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes were inclined to intemperance §. Their tables were frequently spread and replenished no less than four times a day. The table where they sat at meat always appears covered with a cloth, even in the most ancient delineations; some few large dishes are placed upon the table, and the persons sitting round it have constantly each of them a cup or horn, and sometimes both. If the meat was roasted, it appears to have been done upon small spits, and in small pieces, sufficient only for one man; and it was brought to the table upon the spits, and presented by the servants to the guests; to each man his spit, with meat, which he usually cut off and eat on a plate ||. Forks were entirely unknown at this period; and, in the manuscript delineations, where tables spread for feasting are represented, we seldom see above one or two knives; but the reason, without doubt, was, that each man usually carried his own knife about him, which was called his handsec, and served him for a weapon of defence, as well as to carve his meat. The delineations of feasts which appear in the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, are, for the most part, so rudely done, that one cannot give so satisfactory an account of the dishes as could be wished. However, we frequently see the boar's head

\* Ibid.

† See chap. VII. of this part of the Chronicle, and in this volume.

‡ Johnson's Canons.

§ Vol. I. p. 359.

|| See the first volume of the *Popda Angel-cynnann*, or *Manners and Customs of the English*, plate XVI. and the tapestry of Bayeux, in Montfaucon's *Monarchie Francoise*, vol. 2.

dressed.

dress'd whole, set upon the table in a large dish, and sometimes fish and fowls\*.

**Order of sitting at meat.** When they sat down to table, each man might not take his place according to his own fancy, but according to his age, rank, or consequence. By the court laws of king Cnut, all the nobility, and officers of his household, that dined at court, were commanded to take their places according to their ranks, and those of the same rank according to their seniority in office; and if any one took a higher place than belonged to him, he was degraded to the lowest, and all the company were permitted to throw bones at him, without being guilty of rudeness, or liable to any challenge †.

**Food of the Anglo-Saxons.** It will be hard to say what food the Anglo-Saxons most affected, unless it were venison, and the flesh of boars, the head of which animal often formed a respectable part of their provision for the table; beef, mutton, pork, fish, and poultry of all kinds, doubtless furnished out the rest. But, in general, we may conclude that their entertainments were rather remarkable for their abundance, than their delicacy and elegance. Salted provisions of all kinds were provided at the royal banquets; and, at some tables, horse-flesh was held in esteem, especially among the Danes who inhabited Northumberland ‡. As to their cookery, we are so totally left in the dark that it will be impossible to add any thing more to the observations thereon in the former volume.

**Liquors of the Anglo-Saxons.** Besides the liquors which we have seen they affected, in the more early times, namely, ale and mead, the nobility (especially towards the latter end of this period) had others very costly and delicious. In the time of Edward the Confessor, wine, pigment, morat and cyder, besides the two above-named liquors, were provided for the royal banquets §. Wine, if made at all in England, at this period, was only in small quantities; even mead was reckoned among the luxuries of life, so that it was not procured but by persons of opulence. The pigment and morat were still scarcer; the former in particular was so rich and delicious that it was commonly called the nectar of that age ||. Ale was the commonest of all liquors, and in great esteem as well among the Anglo-Saxons as the Danes, and, perhaps, the next was cyder, which, however, is not so often mentioned as the former.

**Amusements of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes.** From hence we shall pass to the amusements of the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes at this period. A people, such as we have found either

\* See the first volume of the *Popda Angel-cynnann*, or *Manners and Customs of the English*, ut *supra*.

† *Leges Curial. Reg. Cnuti apud Bartholin.*

‡ *Wilkin. Concil. t. 1. p. 147. 151.*

§ *H. Hunt. lib. 6. p. 210.*

|| *Pigment* in Latin (*pigmentum*) was a sweet odoriferous liquor, made of honey, wine and spices of all kinds.---*Morat*, in Latin (*moratum*) was made of honey diluted with juice of mulberries. *Du Cange Gloss. in voc.*

of them to be, little inclined to the study of science, or fond of domestic labours, must consequently find a large portion of their time hang heavy upon their hands, which doubtless soon led them to contrive some methods of amusing themselves; and their amusements were chiefly three: martial exercises, rural sports, and domestic games.

War being the employment both of the Saxons and the Danes, the chief of their amusements consisted in athletic exercises, as running, swimming, leaping, riding, wrestling and fighting, all which tended to improve their bodily strength, and accustom them betimes to warlike pursuits, and to endure the fatigues attendant upon them. Martial exercises, and mock fights, were so delightful to the Danes that they conceived them to be the chief diversions they should enjoy in a future state when their souls were received by Odin into his seat of glory\*; and these martial games were the origin of the tournaments which were so frequent, and so famous in the succeeding ages. Horseracing is supposed to have formed a part of the amusements of the Anglo-Saxons; for several running horses † were sent as a present to king Æthelstan by Hugh, king of France, adorned with trappings, and having bits of gold in their mouths.

The sports of the field were chiefly hunting and hawking, which were considered as two of the most material branches in the education of the young nobility, and a thorough skill in them the greatest accomplishment kings or great men could possess. Ælfred the Great is highly extolled for his superior knowledge in these amusements ‡, and Edward the Confessor was so fond of them that he pursued them every day without intermission §. In the ancient delineations, hawks are frequently put upon the hands of noblemen to shew their rank. Princes and nobles were so fond of these birds, that they carried them with them long journeys, and even into battle; for indeed it was reckoned dishonourable for a nobleman to resign his hawk, which was a token of submission and homage. Hunting dogs were also very favourite companions of the nobility at this period ||.

In the reign of king Cnut several laws relative to game were enacted, appointing a certain number of magistrates in every county to punish all offences committed in the royal forests; under these were inferior officers, or game-keepers, whose place was to apprehend all guilty persons. Thanes, bishops and abbots were permitted to hunt in the royal chases, but the penalties were very severe which restrained unqualified persons not only from hunting, but even disturbing of the game. If a gentleman or inferior thane killed a stag in the king's forest, he was degraded, and deprived of his arms; if a peer killed one

\* See page 166 of this volume.

† *Equæ Cursoræ*, Malmsh. lib. 2. cap. 6.

‡ *Aster. vita Ælfredi.*

§ Malmsh. l. 2. c. 13.

|| *Vide tapestry of Bayeux, apud Monsaucon, t. 2.*

he was reduced to slavery; and if a slave killed one, he was to suffer death for his crime. However, these laws confirmed the right of all proprietors of land to hunt in their own grounds, but they were not to pursue the game into the royal chases\*.

**Domestic games** When the intemperance of the season prevented them from following the above-mentioned amusements, the time was usually passed in feasting, drinking, or playing at some domestic game; and the chief of these were the games of chance. Their immoderate passion for dice we have already seen in the former volume; and to what lengths they ran, staking upon a throw the hazard of their lives and liberties †; and there is good reason to think that in the present period, a passion for games of chance was but little abated. The clergy were forbidden playing at them by the canons of the church; the laity however, the nobility in particular, would frequently spend the greater part of the nights in gaming; and this custom was patronized by the encouragement and example of the greatest princes ‡. It is said that among the Danes, and other northern nations, it was customary when a gallant paid his addresses to a young lady, for the father to engage him in a game at chess or dice, in order to try his temper before he gave him an answer §. The chief games of chance were chess, dice and backgammon, which is said to have been invented about this period ||. Other amusements were singing and dancing, in which the youth of both sexes would engage. Their dancing seems to have consisted in feats of activity, and exhibiting difficult postures ¶. Another game, the knowledge of which added to the greatness of a hero's character, was throwing sharp darts or daggers up into the air, and catching them as they fell so dexterously as not to cut their fingers. At other times they would play with balls and knives which they would catch alternately to the music of the violin \*\*. They were undoubtedly acquainted with many other sports, though the knowledge of them at present is lost. To be active and ready in most of these amusements was as necessary to compleat the character of a great hero, as it was to be brave and intrepid in battle. A northern hero boasts of himself in the following terms. "I am master of nine accomplishments: I play well at chess; I know how to engrave Runic letters; I am apt at my book; I know how to handle the tools of the smith; I traverse the snow on scates of wood; I excell in shooting with the bow; I am

\* Constitut. Cnut Reg. de Forest. apud Spelman Gloss. & Wilkins Leg. Sax. p. 146.

† Vol. 1. p. 360.

‡ When bishop Æthelric obtained admission to king Cnut about midnight, upon some urgent business, he found the king engaged with his courtiers, some playing at

dice, and some at chess. Hist. Ram. c. 85.

§ Olaf Magni, p. 572.

|| It was invented in Wales, and derives its name from two Welsh words *back* (*little*) and *cammon* (*battle*). Dr. Hen. Brit. vol. 2.

¶ See plate XVII. fig. 2.

\*\* Ibid. fig. 1.

expert

expert in the management of the oar; I sing to the harp; and I compose verses\*.” And in the ancient chronicles of Norway, king Olaf Fryggefon’s character is drawn in the following striking manner.—“He was stronger and more nimble than any man of his time; he would climb the rock Smalferhorn, and fix his shield on the top of it; he would walk without the boat on the oars whilst the men were rowing; he would play with three darts at once, tossing them up in the air, and always keeping two up whilst one was down in his hand; he could use his weapons with both hands, and throw two javelins at once; he excelled all men in shooting with the bow, and in swimming had no equal †.”

In the ancient times, among the Anglo-Saxons, estates were given <sup>Charters, seals,</sup> away, and confirmed to the receiver without any writing; the donor giving with such such estates a sword, a helmet, or any other trifling matter, as a drinking-horn, a bow, a spur, an arrow, a quill, a curry-comb; but when their charters were confirmed by writing, the donor signed his name with a cross by the side of it, in the presence of some respectable witnesses, who also signed it at the same time ‡. Edward the Confessor was the first that introduced seals of wax, which were afterwards added to the charters; a custom that became very common after the Norman conquest §.

We have already seen that it was common with the Germans in the <sup>Funeral ceremonies,</sup> most ancient times to burn the bodies of their dead, and when this custom subsided, the body was laid upon the ground, and a large heap or mount of earth was raised over it ||; this among the Danes was called the age of burying ¶, and was adopted by them before their conversion to Christianity; for we are informed that when the Danish army found the body of Hubba their chief (who was slain in Dorsetshire, A. D. 878, in a bloody battle fought there between the Danes and the Saxons) they raised a large mount over it, at the same time making loud cries and exclamations \*\*. This custom of raising mounts over the bodies of the dead had been so prevalent among the Northern nations, that on their conversion to Christianity, it was not totally abolished, for they continued to lay them upon the surface of the ground, and covered them over with earth and stones, and this even when they were buried in churches, the floors of which were frequently so incumbered by them as to have rendered them unfit for divine service, and on that account they were abandoned; but this in-

\* Olaf Wormii Lit. Run. p. 129. Barthol. p. 420.

† Pontoppidan’s Hist. Norway, p. 248.

‡ Ingulphus Hist. Croylandæ.

§ See the great seal of Edward the Confessor, plate II. of this volume.

|| Vol. 1. p. 358.

¶ Olaf Worm. Dan. Monum. p. 40.

\*\* John Brompton, in Vita Ælfredi.

convenience soon became an object of great concern ; canons therefore were made, to forbid any person whatever being buried in the churches, except saints, priests, and such noblemen as could pay largely for that privilege, and even those were obliged to be laid in a grave of a proper depth below the pavement \*.

Corps how  
prepared for  
burial.

The corps of a deceased person was first washed with fair water, and then clothed in a close white garment, or else put into a bag or sack of linen, it was afterwards wrapped round from head to foot with a wrapper of coloured cloth, but it was customary to leave the head and shoulders of the corps uncovered with the wrapper till the time of burial, that his friends, and particular acquaintance, might take a farewell view of him, before he was committed to the ground †. When the day appointed for the burial was come, the corps (the head being first entirely covered with the wrapper) was conveyed to the tomb, when two persons took hold of it, one at the head and the other at the feet, whilst the priest or his attendant censured it with incense, after which they kneeled down and deposited it in the grave, whilst the priest concluded the ceremony with prayers and benedictions ‡.

Corps of great  
men, how  
treated.

The bodies of kings, noblemen, and the superior clergy, were treated according to their rank with much more ceremony ; the corps of Wilfrid, archbishop of York, who died A. D. 708, was laid on the ground upon a surplice, and washed by the abbot of Rippon and the monks with their own hands. It was afterwards dressed in the pontifical robes, and was carried in a solemn manner towards the place appointed for his burial, with music and singing of psalms ; they had not proceeded far in this manner, before they stopped again, and set down the corps, over which they pitched a tent, and having unclothed it, bathed it a second time with pure water, and then dressed it in robes of fine linen, placed it upon a hearse, and proceeded towards the monastery of Rippon, singing psalms as before ; as they approached the monastery, all the monks came out to meet it, bearing the holy relics, and, raising their voices, joined the rest of the company in the psalms and hymns that they were singing, and in this manner was the corps conducted into the body of the church, and there deposited in a most solemn and honourable manner §.

\* Wilkins Concil. tom. i. p. 268. Johnson's Canons, A. D. 994.

† See the figure of a corps thus wrapped up, plate XV. fig. 9. taken from an ancient drawing.

‡ See plate XIX. of this volume, which represents a burial, taken also from an Anglo-Saxon MS. delineation.

§ Eddius Vita Wilfredi, edit. 2. Gale, p. 89. See a very full account of the ancient burial ceremonies and monuments of the dead in England in the *bonba Angelcýnnan*, or manners and customs of the English, vol. 1. p. 51, &c.



The house in which a dead body lay, was, till the time of its interment, in a continual uproar, with feasting, drinking, singing, dancing, and various other diversions, which were a great expence to the family of the deceased, and sometimes all the wealth that a dead man left behind him was expended upon these indecent and extravagant entertainments. This Heathenish custom could not be removed by the reasonable dictates of Christianity, which required sobriety and decency, for though it was discouraged by the canons of the church, yet it was so agreeable to the ideas of the people in general, that they could rarely be prevailed upon to abolish it\*.

Feasting at a  
person's de-  
cease.

\* Johnson's Canons, A. D. 957. can. 3.



A MAP  
of the  
SAXON HEPTARCHY.



## A P P E N D I X.

## No. I.

*A Map of England, as it was divided by the Saxons, during the Heptarchy\*.*

THAT the readers may the better understand the Historical Part of this Chronicle, relative to the settlement of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain, and the events that took place from that time to the Norman conquest, it has been thought necessary to add the present map of the kingdom, as it was divided amongst that people. Though the names of the places upon the map are spelled agreeable to the Anglo-Saxon language, yet they are written in the modern character; because the Saxon letters may not be intelligible to many of our readers; and the Saxon names are explained in the following list, by which they may be easily referred to.

ANGLO-SAXON.	MODERN.	ANGLO-SAXON.	MODERN.
Aacanminster	- Axminster, Devonsh.	Carrum	- - - Charmouth, Dorset.
Aclea	- - Okeley, Surry	Cerdicsford	- - - Near Gr Yarmouth
St. Albanes	- St. Albans, Herts.	Ciffanceaster	- Chichester, Suffex
Ambresbyrig	- Ambresbury, Wilts	Coelfey	- in Suffex
Andredfweald	- Weald, Kent	Colneceaster	- Colchester, Essex
Apuldre	- Appledore, ibid.	Cornwealles	- Cornwall
Badenbyrig	- Badbury, Dorset	Cosham	- - - Wilts
Badenceaster	- Bath, Somerset.	Cottingham	- - in Northamptonsh.
Beamdune	- Bampton, Devon.	Coventre	- in Warwickshire
Beamfleot	- Bemflet, Essex	Cridiantum	- Kirton, Devon.
Beddanburg	- Bambury, Northum.	Cyngeftun	- Kingston, Surrey
Bedanaford	- Bedford	Cyppingham	- Chippenham, Wilts
Bernitia	{ North West part of Northumberland	Cyrenceaster	- Cirencester, Gloucest.
Beverlac	- Beverly, Yorkshire	Cumbraland	- Cumberland
Brentford	- Middlesex	Deira	- - - { South East part of Northumberland
Briðthelmstun	{ Brightelmstone, Suffex	Deorby	- - - Derby, Derbyshire
Briðtrow	- Bristow, Somerset.	Deorham	- - - Durbam, Gloucest.
Brunanburh	- not certainly known	- - -	- - - Dereham, Norfolk
Buccingham	- Buckingham	Dofre	- - - Dover, Kent
Cære	- { Carehouse, Nor- thumberland	Doncaster	- - - in Yorkshire
Cant'esburh	- Canterbury, Kent	Dunholm	- - - Durbam
		Dunstable	- - - in Bedfordshire
		Eadmundesbyrig	- S. Edmundsbury, Suff

\* See plate XX. of this volume.

Ealnríc

ANGLG-SAXON.	MODERN.	ANGLO-SAXON.	MODERN.
Ealnríc - -	<i>Alnwick, Northumb.</i>	Merefige - -	<i>Mersley Island, Essex</i>
Earundel - -	<i>Arundel, Suffex</i>	Myrcna Ric - -	<i>Kingdom of Mercia</i>
EastAnglia Ric {	<i>Kingdom of the East Angles</i>	Northamtun - -	<i>Northampton</i>
East Saxona Ric {	<i>Kingdom of the E. Saxons.</i>	Northanhum- bra Ric - -	<i>Kingdom of North- umberland</i>
Easttónes - - -	<i>in Norfolk</i>	Northwic - -	<i>Norwich, Norfolk</i>
Elig - - -	<i>Isle of Ely, Cambr.</i>	Oxenford - -	<i>Oxford</i>
Ellandune - -	<i>Wilton, Wilts</i>	Pedridamuth - -	<i>Mouth of y<sup>e</sup> Pendrid</i>
Eoferwic - -	<i>York</i>	Portefimuth - -	<i>Portsmouth, Hants</i>
Examuth - -	<i>Mouth of river Exe</i>	Portland - -	<i>in Dorset</i>
Exanceafter - -	<i>Exeter, Devon.</i>	Portloca {	<i>Portlockbay, So- mersetshire</i>
Fearnham - -	<i>Fearnham, Kent</i>	Raculf - -	<i>Raculver, Kent</i>
Fleamburg - -	<i>Hamborough Head, Yorkshire</i>	Sandwic - -	<i>Sandwich, ibid.</i>
Folcestan - -	<i>Folkston, Kent</i>	Sceapige - -	<i>Sheepy Island, ibid.</i>
Fulingham - -	<i>Fulham, Middlesex</i>	Silceafter - -	<i>Silchester, Hants</i>
Gafulford - -	<i>Camelford, Cornw.</i>	Slíowaford - -	<i>Sleaford, Lincolnsh</i>
Gillingham - -	<i>in Dorset</i>	Snotingham - -	<i>Nottingham</i>
Gleawanceafter - -	<i>Glocester</i>	Strætford - -	<i>Stratford, Warwick</i>
Grantceafter - -	<i>Cambridge</i>	Streontheal - -	<i>Whitby, Yorkshire</i>
Gypswic - -	<i>Ipswich, Suffolk</i>	Sumertun - -	<i>Somerton, Somersetsh.</i>
Hamtun - -	<i>Southampton</i>	Suthberig - -	<i>Sudbury, Suffolk</i>
Hastingas - -	<i>Hastings, Suffex</i>	SuthSaxona Ric {	<i>Kingdom of the South Saxons</i>
Hengefdune {	<i>Hergstonhill, Corn- wall</i>	Temsford - -	<i>in Bedfordshire</i>
Heortford - -	<i>Hertford</i>	Tenet - -	<i>Isle of Thanet, Kent</i>
Herewic - -	<i>Harwich, Essex</i>	Thetford - -	<i>in Suffolk</i>
Hlidaford - -	<i>Lidford, Devon.</i>	Tinmuth - -	<i>Mouth of the Tine</i>
Hripun - -	<i>Rippon, Yorkshire</i>	Tonebriege - -	<i>Tunbridge, Kent</i>
Hrofeceafter - -	<i>Rocheſter, Kent</i>	Toreceafter - -	<i>Toceſter, Northamp</i>
Humbermuth - -	<i>Mouth of y<sup>e</sup> Humber</i>	Wærham - -	<i>Warham, Dorset</i>
Huntadun - -	<i>Huntington</i>	Wealfingham - -	<i>Walsingham, Norf.</i>
Ircingafeld {	<i>Archiefield, Here- fordshire.</i>	Wegereceafter - -	<i>Worceſter</i>
Lægeceafter - -	<i>WefſtCheſter, Cheſh.</i>	Weramuth - -	<i>Mouth of the Were</i>
Legercaifter - -	<i>Leiceſter</i>	Westmoringland - -	<i>Westmoreland</i>
Licetfield - -	<i>Litchfield, Stafford</i>	West Saxona {	<i>Kingdom of the W. Saxons</i>
Limenemuth - -	<i>Mouth of the Lime</i>	Wetmor - -	<i>Wedor, Somersetsh.</i>
Lindeolan - -	<i>Lincoln</i>	Whitland - -	<i>Isle of Wight</i>
Lindisfearna - -	<i>Holy Island</i>	Wiltun - -	<i>Wilton, Wiltshire</i>
Lundune - -	<i>London</i>	Winburnminſter - -	<i>in Dorset</i>
Mcerlborig - -	<i>Marlbro', Wilts</i>	Winganbeorch - -	<i>Carelsbrook Caſtle</i>
Maidſtan - -	<i>Maidſtone, Kent</i>	Wingamere - -	<i>not certainly known</i>
Manigceafter - -	<i>Mancheſter, Lanc.</i>	Wintanceafter - -	<i>Wincheſter, Hants</i>
Mealdune - -	<i>Maldon, Eſſex</i>	Wipedesfleot - -	<i>Wippedſfleet, Kent</i>
		Witham - -	<i>in Eſſex</i>

No. 2.

*Specimens of the Anglo-Saxon Language.*

**B**ECAUSE it is supposed that many of the readers of this work may be unacquainted with some of the Anglo-Saxon letters, which differ considerably from those in present use, to enable them therefore to understand the following specimens, the Saxon Alphabet is herein given.

LARGE SAXON LETTERS.

ABCDEF GHIKLMNOPQRSTVWXYZ  
Power ABCDEFGHIKLMNOPQRSTVWXYZ

SMALL SAXON LETTERS.

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r r t u p x y z  
Power a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r i t u w x y z

DIPHTHONGS and ABBREVIATIONS.

AE æ Ð ð þ ȝ þ  
Æ æ Th th th and that

Extract from an ancient MS. of the four gospels, written by S. Ealdfrith, at the command of S. Cuthbert towards the latter end of the seventh century\*.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

ƿæder unen ðu anð in ƿeopnum, ƿe geƿaltuð noma ðin to  
*Father our thou art in heaven, be hallowed name thine to*  
cýmeð ƿic ðin ƿe ƿillo ðin ƿuæ is in ƿeopne ȝ in  
*come kingdom thine be will thine as is in heaven and in*  
eoƿðo ƿlaƿ uƿurne oƿen ƿyrclic ƿel uƿ tobeȝ ȝ ƿoƿgeƿ  
*earth bread our over substantial give us to day and forgive*  
uƿ ƿcýlða uƿra ƿuæ ue ƿoƿgeƿon ƿcýlðgum uƿum ȝ ne  
*us debts ours so we forgive debtors our and nettber*  
inlæd uƿriç in coƿtunge uƿ geƿniz uƿriç ƿnom ȝƿle.  
*inlead us each into temptation but deliver us each from evil.*

\* This MS. is in the Cotton Lib. at the British Museum, and is marked Nero D. IV.

## Part of the First Chapter of St. JOHN.

In p̃puma ṽær uõp̃ð 7. uõp̃ð þ̃ iſ goðbeſ ſunu.  
*In the beginning was the word and the word that is God's Son*  
 ṽær mið goð feðer 7. goð ũær uõp̃ð ðiſ p̃ær in  
*was with God the father and God was the word this was in*  
 p̃puma mið goð alle ðeþ̃ hine  
*the beginning with God all [things] through [or by] him.*  
 auõp̃ðen ſint 7. buta þim zeuop̃ðen iſ noþt þ̃ auõp̃ðen  
*made were, and without him made is nought that made*  
 ṽær in þim ⁊ in ðæm liſ. p̃ær 7. liſ p̃ær leſt monna  
*was in him, or in them, life was, and life was the light of men,*  
 7. leſt in þiõp̃ñym geſineð 7. ðiõp̃no þia ne ſp̃om-  
*and the light in darkness shineth and the darkness it not com-*  
 monon p̃ær monn zeſenda p̃p̃om goðe ðæm noma p̃ær  
*prebendeth was a man sent from God, whose name was*  
 John. ðeſ cuom in c̃yðneſe þ̃ t̃æ vittneſſe þ̃  
*John, this [man] came in testimony, that is to witneſs that*  
 c̃yðneſe deþ̃ zeſp̃ymmeðe op̃ leſt þ̃te alle  
*testimony thereby might be made of the light. that all [might]*  
 zeleſp̃don deþ̃ þine [t̃ done ilca] ne ṽær þet ðe ilca  
*believe through him (or that ſame) nor was he that ſame*  
 leſt aþ þ̃te c̃yðneſe zeſp̃ymmeðe p̃p̃om leſt ṽær  
*light, but that testimony might be made from the light, was*  
 leſt roð ðiu inliſt̃eð ælc ⁊ eȝhvelc monno c̃ymmenðe  
*light pure that enlighteneth all or every man coming*  
 in middan.  
*into the world.*

Extract from a MS. in the Anglo-Saxon language, containing the Books of Genesis, Exodus, &c. ſuppoſed to have been written towards the latter end of the eighth century\*.

## Part of the First Chapter of Genesis.

On anynne zeſceop goð þeoſanam 7. eõp̃ðan ſe eõp̃ðe  
*In the beginning created God heaven and earth; the earth*  
 roþlice p̃ær iðel 7. æmti 7. peõt̃na p̃ærion opẽr þ̃ære  
*truely was void and empty, and darkneſs was over that*

\* This MS. is alſo in the Cotton Lib. marked Claudius, B. 4.

nypelnýrre bpadnýrre 7 zoder gart pær zepenob oþen  
*deep surface, and God's spirit was moving over*  
 pætepu. God cpða, zepuþbe leoht 7 le-ht pearð  
*the waters. God said, be there made light, and light was*  
 zeporþt. God zepcaþ ða ðæt hit god pær 7 he to ðælbe  
*made. God saw this that it good was; and he d'd divide*  
 leoht fram ða ðýrtepu 7 þet ðæt leoht dæg 7 þa  
*the light from that darkness, and named that light day, and this*  
 ðýrtepu niht. Ða pær zeporþen æfen 7 meþzan ar dæg.  
*darkness night. Then was made, evening and morning, one day.*

God cpæþ þa epten zepuþbe nu pærtnýr to midder  
*God said then after, be there made now a bulwark between*  
 þam pætepu 7 to tþame þa pætepu fram þam pætepu  
*those waters, and to divide these waters from those waters;*  
 7 god zeporþte ða pærtnýrre 7 tþamde ða pætepu ða  
*and God made that bulwark, and divided these waters that*  
 pænon under ðære pærtnýrre fram ðam ðe pænon buþan ðere  
*were under that bulwark from those that were above that*  
 pærtnýrre. Hit pær ð. rpaþe don 7 3.ð þet ða pærtnýrre  
*bulwark. It was then so done, and God named that bulwark*  
 þeoponam. 7 pær ði zeporþen æfen 7 meþzen oðer dæg.  
*Heaven. And was then made, evening and morning, another day.*

Extract from a MS. written in the tenth century\*.

þer iſ re ge'lepa 7 zeheb 7 bletung læpedun mannun  
*Here is the Belief and Prayer, and blessing, (for) lay men,*  
 þe þ Leben ne cunnon. Pæten noſtrea on Fng'le.  
*those that Latin not know. Pater noſter in Engliſh.*

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

þu une pæden þe eart on þeopenum ðý þin nama gehalgod  
*Thou our father that art in heaven, be thy name hallowed;*  
 gecume þin rice ðý þin willa ſpa rpa on þeopenum rpa  
*come thine kingdom; be thine will ſo as in heaven ſo*  
 eac on eorþan ryle uſ to dæg unne dægþpamlican þlaþ 7  
*also on earth; give us to day our daily bread, and*  
 forgyf uſ une gyltas rpa rpa pe forgyfað þam þe p'ð uſ  
*forgive us our guilt ſo as we forgive them that with us*  
 agyltaþ 7 ne læd þu na uſ on coſtninge ac  
*are guilty; and neither lead thou not us into temptation, but*  
 alýr uſ fram ýfele. rý hit rpa.  
*preserve us from evil. Be it ſo.*

\* In the Cotton Lib. mark'd Cleopatra B. 13.

## The BELIEF.

Ic gelype on god fader ælmihtigne scýppend þeopenam ⁊  
*I believe in God, the father almighty, maker of heaven and*  
 eorðan. ⁊ ic gelype on hælend Crist þyr ancennedan runnu  
*earth. And I believe in holy Christ, his only begotten son*  
 urne dr. þten. Se pær ge eacnod of þam þalzan gaste. ⁊  
*our Lord, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and*  
 accenned of Marian þam mædene. geþnopod under þam Pontiscan  
*born of Mary the maiden, suffered under the Pontius*  
 Pilate. on rode a þangen. þe pær deað. ⁊ be býrgeð. ⁊  
*Pilate, on the cross was hanged; he was dead and buried, and*  
 þe nýþer artaþ to þelle. ⁊ þe anar of deaþe on þam þrubban  
*he descended to hell; and he arose from death on the third*  
 dæge. ⁊ þe artaþ up to þeopenum. ⁊ sitt nu æt spíðnan  
*day, and he ascended up to heaven, and sits now at the right hand*  
 godes ælmihtiger fader. þa non þe pile cuman to demenne  
*of God, almighty father; from thence he will come to judge*  
 ærþen ⁊ þam cucum. ge þam deaðum. ⁊ ic gelype on þope  
*both the living and those dead. And I believe in the*  
 þalzan gaste. ⁊ þa þalzan gel. þunge. ⁊ þalzena ge mænnýrre.  
*holy ghost, and the holy church, and the holy communion,*  
 ⁊ rýnna forþennýrre. ⁊ plærceþ æpir ⁊ þ ece lif.  
*and sins forgiveness, and the flesh arising, and the eternal life.*  
 ri þit rpa.  
*Be it so.*

The exordium of an Anglo-Saxon poem, as recorded by Bede in his  
 Ecclesiastical History, composed by Cædman, an extraordinary poet.  
 It here stands according to the Saxon version, as given by king  
 Ælfred.

Nu pe sceolan þenizean  
 þeopon piceþ peapð  
 Metoder miþte  
 ⁊ þyr mod geþanc  
 peopc pul ðor fader  
 rpa þe pundra geþpær  
 Ece driþten onð on scealo  
 þe æper scop

eoþan beapnum  
 þeopon to poþe  
 þaliz scýpend  
 pa midðang eapð  
 Mon Cýnner peapð  
 Ece Driþtene æfter teode  
 pþum folðan  
 pþea ælmihtig.

An attempt to render the sense of this beautiful poem in English:

*"Now ought we to praise the maker of the kingdom of heaven—the powerful creator, and his council, the glorious working father!—who first made the heaven, as a roof to the sons of men!—Holy creator! everlasting lord, and keeper of mankind! The world was after made by thee, supreme almighty!"*

Extract from a Paraphrase of the Four Gospels, in the Anglo-Danish language.—This book is said formerly to have belonged to king Cnut.\*

The LORD'S PRAYER paraphrased.

Pateþ norþen fæþer iſt uſa fíuio þarþno. Þþu biſt an tþem  
*Pater noſter, Father art of uſ men. Thou art in the*  
 þeoþen þimilro þíkíe. quiniþið ſi tþin namo uuopþu gi-  
*high heaven ruler. Cauſe that thine name in words be*  
 þuiliçu. cume tþin cþaſtíga þíkí. uuertþe tþin uuilleo oþaþ  
*hallowed. Come thy powerful kingdom. Work thine will over*  
 tþera uuepoþb alle ſo ſamo on eþþu ſo tþaþ uppe iſt an tþam  
*this world, all the ſame on earth as there above it is on the*  
 þoþon þimilo þíkíe. ʒiþ uſ dage ʒiþuiliçer það þnoþtín  
*high heaven kingdom. Gíue uſ daily council, Lord,*  
 tþie ʒuoþo tþina þelegg þelpu enði alaþ uſ þeþener  
*thy good and thine holy help; and forgive uſ, O heaven's*  
 manegaro menn ſculþiſ alro uuioþpon mannon þuan. ni  
*governor! all our debts aſſo, as we forgive menſ debts; neither*  
 laþ uſ þaþleþean letþa uuipþi ſo þoþtþan iþo uuilleon ſo uuí  
*let uſ be miſſed by wicked perſonſ ſo forth to their will ſo we*  
 muþþiſ ʒ. nð. ac þiþp uſ uuipþaþ allon ubilon oþeoþon.  
*ſeduced be, but help uſ againſt all evil deedſ.*

\* This MS. is in the Cotton Library, mark'd Caligula, A. vii.



## No. 3.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

- I. **K**ING Æadgar, from an ancient delineation in an Anglo-Saxon MS. in the Cotton Library; written at the end of the ninth century\*.
- II. The Great Seal of Edward the Confessor, taken from Speed †.
- III. A portrait of the famous Saint Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, taken from a MS. in the Cotton Library ‡, which, from the appearance of the hand, must have been written, during his life time, or, very soon after his death. The two figures in white, kneeling at his feet, I take to be Ethelwald, bishop of Winchester, and Oswald, bishop of Worcester, his great assistants against the married clergy; and the other in black, is probably the monk who was at the pains to make the drawing. In the compartments above we read: Dunst-ni, archie-piscopi—[portrait] of Dunstan, archbishop.
- IV. Danish soldiers.—The murder of the Innocents is here represented; and this drawing is found in a MS. paraphrase of the Four Gospels, said formerly to have belonged to king Cnut. This book is also in the Cotton Library §.
- V. Representation of a farm yard, with the implements of husbandry. The plough, scythe, sickle, and cart, on the left hand side, are from an old Cottonian MS ||. The harrow is from the tapestry of Bayeux ¶. The cart, with the man in it, driving it, and the spade, are from another MS. in the Cotton Library \*\*. The house, and the rest of the back ground, are chiefly fancy.
- VI. A ship and row-galley from a MS. in the Vatican Library, first copied by Bartolo ††.
- VII. An ancient lantern, drawn from the original, at the Musæum at Oxford.
- VIII. Saxon pennies, No. 1. round the head we read ECGBERHT : REX. x. *Egbert king*; and, on the reverse, OBA. MONETA, for *monetarius*, in English, *oba. moneyer*. This coin is of the Great Egbert who united the Heptarchy. No. 2. Round the head AEDLVVLF. REX for *Æthelwulf king*. Here note the Ð always stands of *Tb*, as does the letter D sometimes without the cross mark. On the reverse, HVN. MONETA, *Hun. Moneyer*. No. 3. AEDLBALD, REX *Æthelbald*,

\* Marked Tiberius A. 3.

† Speed's Chronicle, p. 393.

‡ Claudius A. 3.

§ Caligula A. vii.

|| Julius A. vi.

¶ Vide Montfaucon's Monarchie Francoise, t. 1. sub finem.

\*\* Claudius B. iv.

†† This MS. is said to be near 1000 years old.

King,

*King.* On the reverse, REANMVN: MONETA, *Reannun Moneyer*. No. 4. AEDELBEARHT. REX; *Æthelbryht king*; on the reverse, DEGBEARHT: MONETA. No. 5. AEDELREO: REX. *Æthelred*; on the reverse ELBERE—MONETA. No. 6. ÆLFRED: REX. on the reverse, a monogram not well understood. No. 7. EADYVEARD: REX. *Eadweard, or Edward, king*. This is Edward the Elder, son of Ælfred; on the reverse, HEREMOD. M. for *Monetarius, or Moneyer*. No. 8. ÆDLSTAN. REX, for *Æthelstan*; on the reverse ABERTEE: MO: EO: for *Eoferwic, York*. No. 9. EADMVND: REX. This is the first *Edmund*, brother to *Æthelstan*; on the reverse EREMHART: MONETA. No. 10. EADRED. REX; on the reverse SAYYRD MONE. No. 11. EADVIG: REX: on the reverse HERIGER. MO. No. 12. EADGAR. REX. ANGLORVM. *Eadgar, king of the English*; on the reverse LEOSIG: MO: HAMT, *Leofsig Moneyer, at South or North Hampton, which anciently were both called Hamtun*. No. 13. EADPARD: REX. ANGLORVM. *Eadward*. Here note, the P upon Saxon coins usually stands for W. on the reverse VWLSTAN MO STANF. for *Stanford, now Stamford*. This coin is of Edward the Martyr. No. 14. ÆDELRED: REX. ANGLVM; on the reverse, GOD PINE M<sup>o</sup>. LVND: for *Lunden, now London*. This coin is of Æthelred the Second, commonly called the Unready.

- IX. No. 1. ÆDELRED: REX. ANG. on the reverse ÆLWINE: MO: LVND. abbreviated for *Monetarius Lunduni, Moneyer at London*: this coin is of *Æthelred the Second*. No. 2. ÆDMVND: REX. ANGLORVM. on the reverse TMDRED: MO. THEOT, *Temdred, or Tamdred Moneyer at Thetford*: this coin is of *Eadmund*, first named Ironsides. No. 3. CNVT: REX. on the reverse SPERTINGOID: EOR, abbreviated, perhaps for *Eoferwic, now York*. No. 4. HAROLD: REX; on the reverse BRVNVST: MO: DEOTF. *Moneyer at Thetford*: this is a coin of the first *Harold*, son of king Cnut. No. 5. HARDACNVT: on the reverse LEOSAN: ON: LVND. *London*. No. 6. EDPARD: REX. *Edward king*: on the reverse, COVMVND: ON: STÆF: or *Stafford*. No. 7. EADPARD REX ANGL, *Edward, &c.* on the reverse, BRYNMIC: ON: LVN. *London*. These two last coins are of *Edward the Confessor*. No. 8. HAROLD: REX. ANGL. on the reverse, LEOPINE ON. BRI for *Brigstow, Bristol*. This coin is of the Second *Harold*, son of Godwine, earl of Kent. No. 9. ANLAF: CYNUNG, *Anlaf King*; on the reverse ATHELFERD: MINETRIL. perhaps for *monetarius moneyer*. This is supposed to be a coin of *Anlaf*, son of *Sithric*, a Danish king of Northumberland, who occasioned so much trouble to Æthelstan. No. 10. VVLFREDI. ARCHIEPISCOP. *Vulfrid Archbishop*; on the reverse DOROVERNAE: CIVITATIS of the city of *Canterbury*. No. 11. CEOLNOTH: ARC: *Ceolnoth Archbishop*; on the reverse HILORNMD:

ORNMOD : MONET. or *Moneyer*. These two specimens of archiepiscopal coins were thought sufficient. No. 12. is one of the Peter Pence \*; and the two following are ficas, or brass coins, struck only in Northumberland. No. 13. EANRED : REX. on the reverse MONNE, perhaps the Moneyer's name. No. 14. VIGMVNDI : A. *Wigimund archbishop* [of York]; on the reverse HVNIA. perhaps the Moneyer's name. Note, All the coins upon these two plates, except the two last, are silver. To the kind assistance of Mr. Bartlet and Mr. John White of Newgate-street; the author is indebted for this complete series of the Anglo-Saxon coins of the monarchy.

- X. Habits of the Anglo-Saxons. No. 1. An archbishop. 2. A bishop. 3. A monk; 4, 5, 6. Persons of distinction. No. 3. is from a MS. in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth. No. 1 & 2. from a MS. in the Cotton Library †. No. 4. from another MS. in the same library ‡; and No. 5 & 6, from the Cædman in the Bodleian Library at Oxford §.
- XI. Habits of Anglo-Saxon noblemen and persons of distinction. No. 1. 2. 4. 5, from a MS. in the Cotton Library ||; 3 & 6, from another MS. in the same library ¶.
- XII. Anglo-Saxon ladies, &c. No. 1. from an ancient MS. in the Cotton Library \*\*. No. 3. from another MS. in the same library ††. No. 4. the boys; and No. 6. are from another MS. also in the same library ‡‡. No. 2. from a MS. in the Lambeth Library §§; and No. 5. from the Cædman at Oxford |||.
- XIII. A map of the world, copied from an ancient MS. in the Cottonian Library, written partly in Latin and partly in the Anglo-Saxon language, which by the hand appears to have been executed towards the latter end of the tenth century ¶¶. As the writing upon it will be unintelligible to the greater part of the readers, it is thought proper to explain it as well as we shall be able in this place; and that the part of the writing upon the map may be the more easily referred to, it is divided into twenty squares, which are described in successive order one after the other, beginning at the left hand and passing to the right.
- No. 1. Gentes XLIV. *forty-four nations*; flumen a river—*over the lion* hic abundant leones, *here are many lions*.

\* The inscription is SCI PETRI MONETA for Sancti Petri Moneta, St. Peter's money; on the reverse, EBORA, CIV. pro Eboracenſis civitas, *the city of York*.

† Marked Vitellius, C. 3.

‡ Claudius B. 1v.

§ Junius xi.

|| Claudius, B. 1v.

¶¶ Tiberius, B. v.

\*\* Cleopatra, C. viii.

†† Galba, A. xviii.

‡‡ Claudius, B. 1v.

§§ MS. of Aldhelm, de virginitate.

||| Junius xi.

¶¶ Tiberius, B. v.

2. *A chain of mountains behind the lion, and over them is written Taurini montes, the Taurinian mountains—near the top mons aureus, the golden mountain; India in qua sunt gentes XLIV. India, in which are 44 nations; Fison flu. Fison river, Aracusia.*

3. *An island at the top whereon is written, in Abrobanæa x civitas bis in anno mensa fuges, in Abrobanæa x cities, twice in a year they gather fruit. Media, Mede; Nikvie (perhaps for Ninive) Nineveh; Persidia, Persia; Arabia, Syria; Eadmou, perhaps for Cadueni, a people in the country of Coria in Lesser Asia; Chaldea, Arabia Deserto, the Deserts of Arabia; Mons Sina, Mount Sina.*

4. *Hic dicitur esse mons super ardens, here is said to be a mountain burning at the top; flumen Nila, river Nile\*.*

5. *Mare Caspiam, the Caspian sea; montes Armeniæ, the Armenian mountains; arca Noe, Noah's ark; Gog & Magog; people of Scythia, &c. Turcie, perhaps Turkey; Albanorum regio, the kingdom of Albani in Scythia; Armenia—Gryphorum gens, people of Gryphon; Colchorum provincia, the province of Colchis.*

6. *Mesopotamia—Hiberia—Babylonia, Babylon; Commigena, part of Syria; Cæsarea Philippi—Antiocha, Antioch; Vocula civitas, the city of Vocula; Bithinia.*

7. *Moabite, the country of the Moabites; mons Fasga, mount Fasga; mons Gulago, mount Gulago; dimidia trib. Manaso, the half tribe of Manassah; Ruben (the tribe of) Ruben; Gad (the tribe of) Gad; trib. Dan (the tribe of) Dan; Ephraim (the tribe of) Ephraim.*

8. *Egyptus Superior, Upper Egypt; Ethiopica Deserta, the Desert of Ethiopia; Philistea, the land of the Philistines.*

9. *Meotides paludes, the marshes of the Meotides; Tanac fluvium, the river Tanac; montes Ripori, the Riporian mountains; fluvium Ypatus, the river Ypatus. Naperfida—Mesina.*

10. *Mons Taurus, mount Taurus, Cappidocia; Isacircia, perhaps for Ituceo, or else the tribe of Isacher; tribus Zabulon, the tribe of Zabulon; Manasa, Manassah; Tharso, Tarsus, Cilicia; mons Olympus, mount Olympus; Asia Minor, Lesser Asia, Ephesus; Troia, Troy; Constantinopolum, Constantinople; Attica, part of Greece.*

11. *Tribus Zabulon, the tribe of Zabulon; Galilea, Galilee; Juericho, Jericho; Affer (the tribe of) Affer; Aniclea, perhaps Askelon; Hierusalem, Jerusalem.*

12. *Ebron, Hebron; Pentapolis, perhaps for Tripolis; Bethlaem, Bethleham; Neptalin, the tribe of Naphtalim; Alexandria, a city in Egypt; mons, a mountain, Anticlea—Libia Cirinania.—Lac. Calcar-*

\* Note, That all the rivers or lakes, expressed by dots upon the plate, are red in the original delineation; and that part that comes upon the division of the third and fourth squares, is intended for the Red

Sea; and where it is divided at the bottom of the square, is intended to shew the part the children of Israel passed over when they fled from Egypt.

sum, *the lake of Calcarsum*; hic barbari gentes, *here is a barbarous people*; hic Ethiopos, *here the Ethiopians*; hic oberant gingitis & Ethiopos, *here wander about the Gengites and Ethiopians*:

13. Inland Iceland; Scrodusinus—Balgari—Dacia ubi & Gothia, *Dacia and Gotthland*; Salacu—Slefne—Thracia.

14. Hunorum gens, *the Huns*; Danubius fluvius, *the river Danube*; Dalmatia—Pannonia—Histria, *vel Istria*; Athenas, *Athens*; Verona, *Paccia, perhaps for Padua*; Roma, *Rome*.

15. Macedonia; Salernaria, *Salernam, a city belonging to Naples*; Venacia, *Venice*; Cartago Magni, *the Greater Carthage*.

16. Pentapolis, *perhaps for Penopolis, a town in Egypt*; Sutes—Lacus Saliciarnus, *the lake of Saliciarnus*; Libia Ethiopium—Bizacena. Gentes Aucolum pertingente usque ad oceanum, *the people of Aucolum, inhabiting even to the sea*. Cinoccephales. Cartago Magni, *the Greater Carthage*. Zugis regio, ipsa ē ec Africa a enim fortis, sed anterior bestiis, ec serpentibus plena amnis misca (some part of this writing, perhaps, is worn away; for, as it stands at present, it is very difficult to be understood: however, the meaning of it may be as follows.) *This kingdom of Zugis, which is the strongest in Africa; but the anterior part of it is full of beasts, serpents and rivers*.

17. Britania, *Britain*; Hibernia, *Ireland*; Tyleri. The other writing is so much obliterated as not to be easily made out.

18. Lundonia, *London*; Wintonia, *Winchester*; Cantia, *Kent*—Suthbryttas: Bartiminacus. Ispania Anterior, *Spain Anterior*; Brigantia, *Portugal*.

19. VII. Montes, *seven mountains*; Hesperidum civit. *the city of Hesperides*; promontory, *a promontory*.

20. Mauritania—fluvius Malva, *river Malva*; Dora—Mons Iperac, *mount Iperac*.

XIV. A curious ornamented page in an Anglo-Saxon Psalter, preserved in the Cotton Library\*, written about the tenth century. The writing, which is part of the fifty-second psalm, is as follows, the top line only omitted, which seems to be imperfect. Cum venit Doeck Judeus, & adnuntiavit Saul & dixit quia venit David de domo Abimelech.—Quid gloriaris in militia qui potens es in iniquitate? Tota die injustitiam cogitavit; lingua tua, sicut novacula acuta, fecisti dolum.—The Saxon is: Hwæt wuldraft thu on yfelnessē hue rief is unricht-wisnessē thote tuonge thin swa swa scyrfeax scearp thu dyde se facen. In English: *When Doeck came to Judea, and told to Saul that David had left the house of Abimelech.—Why dost thou glory in mischief who art mighty in iniquity? All the day thou imaginest unrighteousness; with thy tongue, like a sharp razor, didst thou work deceit.*

\* Marked Tiberius, C. vi.

XV. Specimens of the art of design: No. 1. and No. 7. are two figures intended to represent our Blessed Saviour in his exalted state; 2 and 3, figures whose habits are rather peculiar; 4. a woman; 5. an archer; 6. a soldier; 8. a woman armed, having a helmet on her head; 9. a dead corps in the usual wrappings; 10 and 11. represent Abraham weighing out the money he paid to the sons of Heth for the purchase of the field of Macpelah.—No. 1. is from the ancient Cædman at Oxford\*; 6 and 8 from a MS. of Aurelius Prudentius in the Cotton Library†; and all the rest from another MS. also in the Cotton Library‡.

XVI. No. 1. A jewel formerly belonging to king Ælfred; the writing round it is AELFRED MEC. HEIHT GEVYRCAN. *Ælfred ordered me to be made.* 2. a penknife; 3. a pen §; 4. the letter T; 5. the letter H, as specimens of ornaments from a book said formerly to have belonged to king Cnut||; 6. a specimen of writing from the same book. The writing is, Uerthe then uilleo othar thesa uærold alla so samo an erthu so thar uppe, &c. *Work thine will over this world the same on earth so as there up,* &c. No. 7. A specimen of the writing in the St. Cuthbert's Gospels, written at the latter end of the eighth century¶. Et respondens Christus dixit iterum in parabolis eis dicens. The Saxon is, and ge thonwode the hælend cueth eftsonu in bispellum him cueth. *And Jesus answered, and said to them in parables,* &c. 8. a specimen of an ancient MS. of Bede's Ecclesiastical History\*\*, the beginning of the fifth book. Successit autem viro Domini Cuthbercto in exercenda vita solitaria, quam, &c. *And after succeeded Cuthbert, a man of the Lord, who had led a solitary life, when,* &c. 9. A specimen from another Anglo-Saxon MS. of part of the Bible††. Lædde Jofep hys fœder into tha cynninge and sette hine beforan. *Joseph led his father to the king, and set him before him.* 10. A specimen from the Cædman at Oxford. Welig. wide stodan. No. 11. Is a bracelet for the arm.

XVII. No. 1. Two figures, one playing on the violin; the other throwing up knives and balls into the air, and catching them dexterously as they fall; 2. a man dancing to the music of the harp; 3. another kind of violin; 4. an organ; 5. a harp; 6. a lyre; 7. an ancient spur, found in a water meadow belonging to Sir William Jones at Rambury, who was so kind as to permit me to engrave it from the original, which is of iron, and has been plated over with silver; 8. a

\* Junius xi. in Bib. Bodleni.

† Cleopatra, C. vi.

‡ Claudius, B. iv.

§ From the last quoted MS.

|| Caligula, A. vii.

¶ In the Cotton Library often mention-

ed before, marked Nero D. iv. Vide plate XX. vol. I.

\*\* This MS. is also in the Cotton Library, marked Tiberius C. 2.

†† This book is often quoted before Claudius, B. iv. in the Cotton Library.

vial; 9 and 12. two standards; 10. is a lyre that is played upon by the handle; 11—13. is a war trumpet; 14. a battle-ax; 15. a hunting horn; 16. and 17. two trumpets. No. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 8. and 14. are from a MS. in the Harleian Library\*; all the rest, except No. 7. from MSS. in the Cotton Library quoted before.

XVIII. Carriages for travelling to and from the buildings, in the back ground, are taken from ancient MSS. though disposed according to the fancy of the designer. The carriage, with the woman in it, is from a MS. in the Cotton Library†. From the same book is taken the two buildings directly over it. The four-wheeled carriage, and the appearance of a distant town, is from another MS. in the same library‡; and from another, is that with two wheels that stands in the front §.

XIX. A burial, the figures taken from a Cottonian MS||. The back ground is partly fancy, except the temple seen behind. The trees are taken from another Cottonian MS¶.

XX. A map of the Saxon Heptarchy.

Some of the author's friends having signified to him, that it would be better if the *Legends* upon the coins on plate XVII. Vol. I. were to be explained, he has thought it his duty to comply with their request.

No. 1. On the reverse ETHILBERHT: RE: for REX. *Ethilberht, king.* 2. On the reverse, EADBALD. R. CA. for Rex Cantia, *Eadbald, king of Kent.* 3. ECGBERHT. on the reverse, EOTBBREHT. the name perhaps of the Moneyer. 4. ETHILBERHT ÷ CANT. on the reverse REX. 5. CVTHRED REX CANT: on the reverse SIGERERHT: MONETA, or Monetarius, *Moneyer.* 6. BELDRED: REX. C. on the reverse DIORMOD: MONE. 7. ETHELVIERED. on the reverse MANNA. MONETA. 8. CVTHRED. REX. on the reverse EABA. 9. SYGF. RONI. 11. on the reverse EVVRAM. MO. 10. OFFA: REX. on the reverse LULLA, the name of the Moneyer. 11. AVDVLFIUS. PRISIN. on the reverse VICTVRIA. ADVLFO. 12. OFFA: REX. on the reverse OCHMVND. 13. E: ORA. on the reverse CYNETHRITH: REGINA, *Cynethrith queen.* 14. COELVVF REX. M. for Coelwulf Rex Mercia. *Coelwulf, King of Mercia.* 15. BEORNVLF. RE: on the reverse EYCSA: MONETA. 16.

\* No. 603.

† Cleopatra, C. vi.

‡ Claudius, B. lv.

§ Tiberius, B. v.

|| Claudius, B. iv.

¶ Cleopatra, C. vi.

LUDICA. REX. ME for Mercia, on the reverse VERGALD;  
MONE.—A gentleman, thoroughly conversant with the Saxon  
coins, has informed me that No. 9. of this plate is not a coin of  
of Sighere as Speed conceived; nor is it at all certain by whom it  
was coined. No. 10. is a coin of Offa the great, king of Mercia,  
and not of Offa, king of the East Angles, as Speed declares; and  
No. 11. though it has been universally received as a coin of Adulf,  
king of the East Angles, is nevertheless not a coin struck by that prince,  
but a foreign coin, and unknown.

F I N I S.